



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

YC158253



*This Book
was presented to the
Athenaeum,
by
Mr. Lodge Elberton Esq^r*







89

70





THE
ELIXIR OF YOUTH,

A Legend in Four Parts,

WITH OTHER POEMS AND NOTES,

BY

JOHN LODGE ELLERTON, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE BRIDAL OF SALEENO," "CARLO ROSA," "ANDROMACHA,"
"PARADISE LOST—AN ORATORIO IN FOUR PARTS," &c., &c.



LONDON :
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, & GREEN.
1864.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY M. LOWND, FENCHURCH STREET, CITY.

ATHEN
CANCELLED.
LIBRARY

953
E45
eli

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Elixir of Youth	1
Eraline and Agnes	43
The Voices of the Past	79
On a Statue of Diana in the Louvre	80
Neglected Genius	83
The Flower of the Wilderness	86
Yes, swift and light	89
Song of the Captive Robber	90
Angel Whisperings	91
The Exile's Song	92
The Wandering Bird	94
The Meeting	97
Thy placid look	99
Ah! once we met	100
The Land	102
Airy Dreams	103
Pæstum	105
Twilight	106
O river! gliding by on silvery wing	107
Song of the Dying Minstrel	111
The Waters of Babylon	114
Tears of the night	122
Disappointment	123
Sleep	124
Moan on, wild-sounding Sea	125
Beethoven's Lament	126
Naples	129
Spring	131
Autumn	132
On the preceding	133
The evening gale sighs gently by	134
The Maiden from afar	137
Longing	138

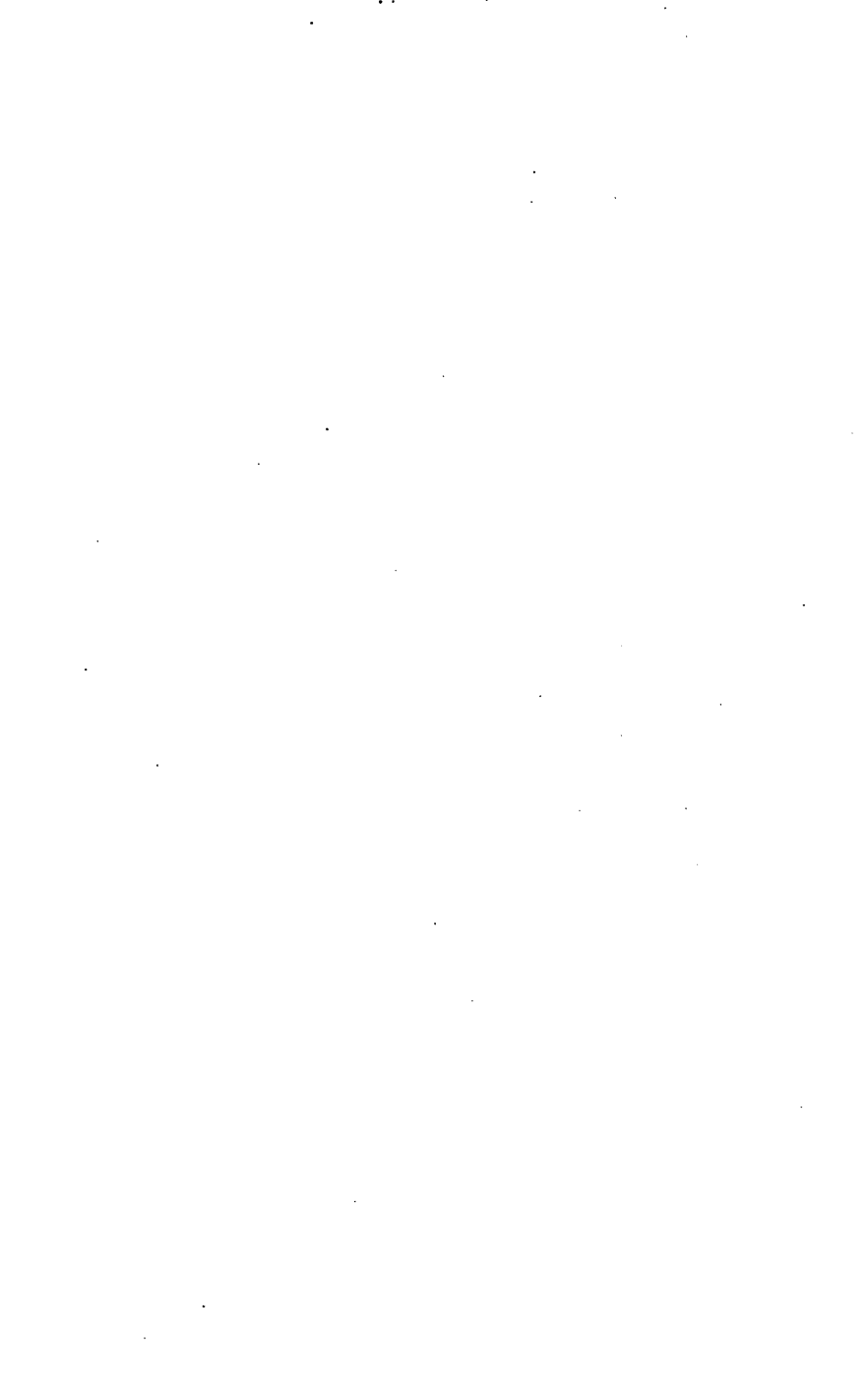
	PAGE
The Pilgrim	140
The Shades of Night	142
The sky is changed	143
Eyes long closed	145
Inconstancy	147
At a healing Spring	148
Count Brümser of Rudesheim	151
Barcarolle	155
The Voice of Music	156
Why should I weep	158
The Parrot of the Orinoco	159
Thy spirit was too pure	161
The Zephyr comes	162
Thy placid air	163
In a garden deserted	164
The Rainbow	164
The Charcoal-burner of the Breisgau	166
True spirits, gentle born	180
Music dies upon the ear	181
While the snow-flakes are falling	182
The Conference of the Dead	183
The Land of Mystery	189
The Raven of Stoltzenfels	191
Ildegarde	203
Break, fond heart	206
Un Raggio	208
A Contrast	209
My bark draws near	212
Wandering Echoes	213
Count Zaro	214
On hearing of the Death of an Old Friend	235
Old Days on Noiseless Wing	236
The Legend of the wicked Lord of Montraval	237
The Moonlight Wreath	251
Philip of Avallon	252
Phantom Voices	257
Sabella	259
'T is sad to think how swiftly fly	260
Barcarolle	262
Notes	263

THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH.

A Legend in Four Parts.

"We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms."

SHAKESPEARE.



THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH.

Part First.

THE BANQUET.

High feast was held in Marli's halls,
To grace the natal day
Of Ugolin, their feudal lord,
Whose locks with age were grey.

'T were better he had prayed that night,
Than pledged the wine cup high,
'Mid ribald song, and jest profane,
And idle revelry !

His years were full three score and ten,
Yet in his restless eye,
And wrinkling brow, and cheek inflamed
With wild debauchery,—

The signs of passions fierce, untamed,
And deadly, might be traced,
Like baleful meteor-fires that gleam,
Athwart the sterile waste.

And men did say his godless youth
Was spent in aught but good,
His ripened age in many a deed
Of mystery and blood.

Thus had he better done in fast
And penitence to pray,
Than with mad song and wild excess,
Profane that warning day!

Six guests were seated at his left,
And six at his right hand,
Thirteen in all were met to feast,
A reckless, jovial band.

And at the hoary Baron's right
Was left a vacant seat,
For Ugolino looked that night
His only son to greet.

But him Urbino's court detained
Amid the light and gay,
Regardless of his sire, whose days
Were ebbing fast away—

Where in the towering Appenines
He dwelt in feudal pride,
And tottering on the grave's dark brink,
The laws of Heaven defied.

The fell, ungodly crew caroused
With goblet pledged amain :
Loud through the pauses of their mirth
Rang out the minstrel's strain :

And Ugolino feasted high
With almost youthful zest—
When death alighted at the gate,
An unexpected guest !

A sound as of a rushing wind
Howled through the turrets grey :
And, heard amid the brawl, perplexed
Each heart with blank dismay.

Before its might the lofty gates
Flew back with jarring din :
The lights burnt blue, the guests grew pale,
While stalked the phantom in.

Swift o'er the startled revellers came
A strange, mysterious gloom—
But Ugolino knew for whom
The grisly form was come !

The spectre glided through the hall
With rapid, noiseless pace,—
It paused a moment by his side,
Then filled the vacant place.

The fourteenth at the banquet sate
That loathsome shape of fear :
Though none beheld him save the Chief,
All *felt* that death was near !

Reckless, the Baron poured the wine
To pledge his phantom-guest,—
But Death his bony finger laid
Upon the old man's breast

He started back, the goblet dropped
From out his slackening grasp,—
He sunk in deep and deadly swoon
With one convulsive gasp.

Sudden the startled guests arose,
For one brief moment scared—
“They would inquire the following morn
How Ugolino fared.”

In haste, with heartless, wicked sneer,
Decamped the ungodly crew—
“They came to Marli’s halls to feast—
This Ugolino knew!”

“But scenes like this!—’twas not for them
To tend the couch of pain—
Why tarried Manfred? ties were their’s
Forbad them to remain!”

They rode away with hearts unmoved,
And projects for the morrow,
Leaving with eager haste the abode
Of Death, and gloom, and sorrow!

Thus was the feudal lord of all
Those lands and castle fair,
With no kind friend at hand, consigned
To menials' heartless care.

Part Second.

UGOLINO.

Deep silence reigned in Marli's halls
Where late the song rang high,
And the inebriate toast was pledged
Mid frantic revelry.

The boding owl's funereal note
Alone was faintly heard :
But else no sound disturbed the ear,
No mortal footstep stirred.

A withered crone the live long night
Watched by the Baron's bed,
And with her long, lank hands, upheld
Her dying master's head.

As morning broke, he slowly woke
From deep and death-like trance—
Conscious at length, he cast around
One terror-stricken glance—

“My son, my son! why tarriest thou?”
With faltering voice, he cries—
“Oh! haste thee, Manfred, haste, once more
To glad these longing eyes!”

“Summon my vassals, swift, bid all
O'er vale and mountain ride—
Ten thousand golden crowns to him
Brings Manfred to my side!”

“Saddle my fleetest steeds—away!
Or soon 't will be too late—
For I must see him ere I die,
Or fearful is my fate!”

He paused, then cried again—"Hark, hark!

He comes at thundering speed!

My ears deceive me not—he comes

To save me at my need!"

The beldame listened in amaze,

Her ears no sound had heard,

Save of the raven's heavy wing

That near the casement whirred;

Or the rain that 'gan to patter fast

Against the rattling pane,

And the wind that bade the hoary pines

To groan and swing amain.

The dying man had heard aright,

For soon amid the war

Of elements, a courser's tramp

Dim echoed from afar.

Few moments more, and Manfred spurned

The stair with hasty stride,

Threw back his dripping cloak, and stood

Pale at his father's side:

And as he viewed his piteous plight,
Perchance his heart was moved
Towards one who, hating all the world,
Himself had ever loved.

He bent him o'er his fainting sire,
Who whispered in his ear—
And Manfred signed the menial train
To leave that chamber drear.

At length the Baron, faltering, sighed
In accents faint and weak—
“My son, my Manfred! treasure well
The words that I shall speak.”

“Brief time is given me to unfold
The bidding thou must do,
When I am dead—and should'st *thou* fail
None other would be true!”

He paused awhile—one searching glance
Around the room he threw,
Then from his breast in trembling haste
A crystal phial drew,

With rosy liquid charged, so small,
'T was scarce a finger's length ;
He gazed upon it for awhile
With renovated strength.

It seemed the very sight had power
To fan life's dying spark :
Like lamp by airy current fed,
When all around grows dark.

“ O precious essence, juice divine !”
He cried—“ my hard-earned treasure !
Whose virtue gives immortal youth—
O fount of endless pleasure !”—

“ Behold the grand, mysterious prize
Which years of toil have won !
This to thy hands I now confide,
Manfred, beloved son !”

“ Thou dost remember long ago
How my lone nights I spent
Where the alembic's furnace glowed,
On mystic lore intent :”

“ Enough ! with patient, deep research,
I learnt the glorious truth—
The treasure I so long had sought,
The source of endless youth ! ”

“ Now hear me ! When the breath has left
This withered, weary frame,
Thy filial hand must light again
Life’s bright celestial flame : ”

“ And thou, with this all-precious dew,
Till not one drop remain,
Must swift anoint my rigid corse,
Which Death hath struck in vain ! ”

“ Straight shalt thou see, beneath thy hand,
Fresh youth and bloom arise,
And Love’s ethereal fire again
Illume these agèd eyes— ”

“ A brother, and a sire no more,
Before thee will appear,
In face and form as when I reached
First manhood’s glowing year ! ”

“Then hand in hand, o’er pleasure’s paths,
My Manfred! we will stray,
No sad foreboding doubts and fears
Our wanton course shall stay—”

“Ah! think, my son! what endless joys,
What transport shall be ours;
What ever-changing, rapturous bliss,
Shall urge the flying hours!”

“The midnight feast, prolonged till morn,
The gamester’s wild excess—
Deep, purple draughts of generous wine,
And woman’s dear caress—”

“The festive mask—the whispered pledge—
The moonlight serenade—
And meetings in the silent grove,
And virgin hearts betrayed!”

“What sight so precious to the eye
As beauty in distress—
What music half so sweet as sigh
Of sorrowing loveliness!”

“The thirst of vengeance hoarded long,—
Indomitable pride,—
Ambition’s wildest reveries,—
Shall each be gratified!”

“All this be ours! Such transports fierce
Shall our young hearts inspire,—
And I have wealth, unbounded wealth,
To fill thy heart’s desire!”

“Know, deep within this castle’s vaults,
Are glittering ingots piled;
~~and rainbow~~
~~gems~~ gems, in countless heaps,
Lie in confusion wild.”

“To him alone the way is known,
Who owns the precious dew;
Or him for whom its magic power
Hath bade life spring anew.”

“With aid of this, our days shall speed
Mid scenes of varying bliss—
Let churchmen prate of paradise,—
What heaven ask we but this?”

He ceased—for life ebbed fast away—

He poured one feeble sigh—

But Manfred grasped the phial close,

And uttered no reply.

Perchance in that brief space, the thought

Flashed o'er the old man's brain,

That paradise may ne'er be found

Where selfish passions reign.

Manfred, bewildered, slow retired,

Lost in mysterious dread,

And left his father's side, though life

Its shrine had scarcely fled.

From the high casement long he gazed

Upon the dizzy steep,

Whence o'er the wide and sea-bound plain

Tower'd Marli's feudal keep.

The first emotions of surprise

And terror passed away,

As slow he comprehended all

He heard the dying say.

And dim anticipations thronged
His brain in rapid stream,
Till silence' self appeared to speak,
And woke him from his dream.

“All, all at length, is mine—” thought he—
“And with it such a power
As scarce imagination dreamt
In boyhood's sanguine hour!”

“*For ever*, to enjoy these gifts!—
Lord of yon vast domain,—
Endowed with never-failing youth,—
Exempt from age and pain!”

“Sure, 't is a dream!—and dying men,
'T is said, will sometimes rave—
'T were well to prove if this indeed
Have might to cheat the grave!”

He turned him towards the silent couch
Where Ugolino lay :
And something told that what he saw
Was nought but senseless clay.

Although the posture was the same
As when he breathed and spake :
What was there then in that dull form,
That bade his spirit quake !

He oped the phial's golden seal,—
A single drop let fall
Upon the filmy eye, now veiled
In death's mysterious pall :

When lo ! at once, it beamed, instinct
With pure and living light,
And gazed with rapture on the youth,
Transparent, full, and bright !

Like to a dewdrop, glistening o'er
A dry and leafless spray,
Shone strange that one bright living orb
Mid wrinkles and decay :

Big, sparkling drops then gathered slow
Beneath the fringe of jet—
The cold and haggard cheek of death
With warm, fresh tears was wet.

Straight on the youth one look of love,
Confiding, deep, it threw—
But Manfred sealed the priceless flask,
And pale, yet firm, withdrew.

The eye flashed fire, as if it fain
The parricide would blight
With one fierce, withering glance of hate—
Then closed in endless night.

Next evening by the torch's glare,
In solemn pomp and slow,
They bore the Baron to the grave
Where Prince and Serf must go:

And the bells tolled loud—the chapel walls
In funeral black were hung,
And fifty priests, to speed the soul,
A solemn requiem sung.

A blazoned marble, reared on high
Within the holy fane,
To Ugolino, feudal lord
Of Marli's wide domain—

Recorded virtues which, alive,
The Chief had ne'er professed ;
And gave his soul, who sneered at prayer,
" In Heaven, eternal rest !"

Part Third.

THE PLOT.

Behold the Baron Manfred, heir
Of Marli's lordly seat,
And all the fertile lands that stretched
Far as the eye could mete.

But he might not endure to dwell
Where many a scene recalled
The ghastly memories of the past,
The dreams his soul appalled !

He sought fair Venice' marble piles,
Where vice was taught to wear
An aspect almost virtue-like,
So soft, refined, and fair.

There Manfred in excess plunged deep,
Each frenzied transport knew ;
And while he ran the headlong course,
His heart still harder grew.

Until, as time flew swiftly by
On pleasure's varying stream,
He learnt to look upon the past
As some dark, spectral dream.

Thus fifteen years soon rolled away—
And youth and bloom were fled,
Thin, straggling locks of envious grey
Were scattered o'er his head.

The once full cheek had long since lost
Its ripe and mantling glow,
And dull old age was creeping on
With footstep sure and slow.

Manfred now deemed the time were come
When he should seek a mate,
And he had long matured a scheme
To evade his father's fate.

He chose a maid of spotless fame,
Young, and of noble strain,
But portionless, to be his bride,
Nor wooed he long in vain.

Ere yet one blissful year was fled,
She bore her lord a son,
And Manfred dreamt the glorious boon
Of endless youth was won!

Another year flew by—the dame
A lovely daughter bore,
Who cost her gentle mother's life,
And grieved Lord Manfred sore—

“A thousand golden crowns to him
Who saves her precious life,
And gives again to these fond arms
My pure and loving wife!”

In hope the promised fee to gain,
The Leech, with look profound,
And solemn shrug, and thoughtful brow,
And eyes that sought the ground,—

Prescribed the nostrum which he deemed
The patient's need required—
But all in vain—for, ere the night,
The noble dame expired !

And Manfred's anxious care was given
To train young Gaston's mind,
By nature to high sentiment
And generous thought inclined.

He sought a tutor known and tried,
A Priest of life austere,
And bade him teach his docile charge
The laws of Heaven to fear.

Thus Gaston's mind was formed ;—and now
His sixteenth year was passed,
A well-accomplished youth was he,
With gentle manners graced.

The fifth command, a parent's claim,
He early learnt to know ;
To venerate that sacred name
Had been his daily vow.

The Baron, at his sixtieth year,
Was prematurely old ;
What then availed him all his store
Of sparkling gems and gold ?

He felt, alas ! the zest was gone
For ancient pleasures now—
He deemed the time at length arrived
To strike the fateful blow.

Not far from Padua's antique walls,
Laved by the Brenta's flood,
In fairy-like magnificence
His summer palace stood ;

Adorned with all that cunning art,
Or luxury could devise,
To soothe the most fastidious taste,
Or charm with new surprise.

In this enchanted spot—the time,
The lovely month of June,
While o'er the glistening stream arose
The bright Italian moon,

And all was still,—he bade his son,
Retire with him, alone,
And thus addressed the docile youth
In deep and earnest tone :—

“ My Gaston ! thou hast ever been
A duteous child to me,
And well thou knowest a father's care
Hath gently nurtured thee.”

“ The time draws nigh when thou my love
With answering care shalt pay,
When I am dead, and this old frame,
Resolves to silent clay.”

“ For I begin to feel the weight
Of fast-increasing years :
Remorseless Death, who spareth none,
Will strike—nay, dry those tears !”

“’T is only that we all must know,
To quit this mortal coil,—
Perchance to win a better life,
All free from care and toil.”

“And when this change comes over me,
When Death hath seized his prey,
With calm, unshrinking hand, must thou
My last behest obey,”

“But thou art young, and what I ask
Will task thy boldest nerve ;
Then, as thou lovest me, beware,
Lest thy firm courage swerve !”

“Behold this rosy juice ! ’t is fraught
With powers that baffle time—
Receive, and guard it well—’t was won
With toil of thought sublime !”

“With this mysterious balm must thou,
Till not *one* drop be left,
When I am dead, anoint my frame
Of consciousness bereft.”

“It’s power alone can cleanse away
The taint of early vice,
And open to my longing soul
The gates of paradise !”

“And now, my son ! thou knowest all—
Leave me to needful rest,
And be my solemn charge concealed
Within thy filial breast.”

“Swear to observe my last behest,
As thou would’st heaven obtain—
Gaston, ’t is all I ask of thee—
We ne’er may meet again !”

The youth, in tears, obedience vowed,
Then left the darkened room,
Where Manfred sate, immersed in thought,
Amid the deepening gloom.

The Brenta’s flood rolled ’neath the walls
Peaceful as childhood’s dream,
And moon, and stars, and drooping trees,
Were imaged in the stream,

Whose soothing music gently fell
In murmurs on the ear,
Blended with note of nightingale
That plaintive warbled near.

And the soft air, that breathed of heaven,
Stole over Manfred's brow,
With scents from flowers, which in that clime
In wild profusion blow.

At times the fitful, faint west wind
Adown the stream would come,
Bearing upon its dreamy wing
The distant city's hum.

But this was slowly hushed to rest,
As midnight's hour drew nigh,
And the summer breezes died away
With sad and feeble sigh.

And then no sound but of the stream
And night-bird's wandering note,
Save when the gondolier's low chaunt
From distance chanced to float.

And when this airy music ceased,
The silence seemed to dwell
With deeper magic on the heart,
And strange, resistless spell.

And Manfred listened, rapt in thought,
Till o'er his withered heart
There came a phantom-dream of old,
That bade the tear-drop start.

Life's vernal bloom, so early lost !
Again he seemed to taste ;
And youth's enchanting visions flashed
O'er memory's dreary waste.

“ And is it mine again to know
The freshness of the soul !
Secure that I for aye am free
From envious Time's control ! ”

“ To revel in these fairy dreams,
With all the ripened joy
That age can teach,—ah, this indeed
Were bliss without alloy ! ”

“ And lo ! my laboured scheme matured—
For Gaston’s pious care,
Unbiased by cold selfishness,
Will save me from the snare”

“ In which my doting father fell,
Who fain of me would ask
A sacrifice, to compass which
Were more than mortal task !”

“ And now the time is come when I,
Death’s transient slumber o’er,
Shall wake to life and youth again,
To know old age no more !”

“ What if he falter in the act,
Ere yet it be complete !—
But no—such gloomy fears are vain—
For women only meet !”

“ And he who fain the glorious boon
Of youth renewed, would win,
Must soar on eagle-wing, nor heed
The human voice within—”

“Then welcome, Death ! since thou must ope
The gates of life again—
For boundless joys who would not dare
One fleeting hour of pain !”

He pressed a casket's burnished lid,
Which, springing wide, displayed
A flask with crystal liquid filled—
He paused awhile, dismayed—

Then, rallying, drained the mortal draught,
And through the casement sped
The flask—ere yet it reached the stream,
Lay Manfred pale and dead !

Part Fourth.

THE CATASTROPHE.

The morning broke serenely bright
Over the distant hills,
And bathed in floods of golden light
The groves and laughing rills.

Gaston, who long had watched the dawn,
Awaked from fevered rest,
Now felt day's influence chase the dreams
That scared his harassed breast.

In eager haste he trod the lawn
With glittering dew-drops wet,
And breathed the fragrant air where rose
The lofty parapet.

He sprung into a gondola,
And struck the freshening wave :
The waters sparkled round his oar,
And the light vessel clave,

Like bird that skims through open sky,
The Brenta's gliding stream ;
Till soon, amid the glow of youth,
Vanished his spectral dream.

Now buried deep in reverie
He urged the vessel slow,
Or careless bade it, with poised oar,
Adown the current flow.

He raised his eyes, and thought he saw
His father's form appear ;
From the high casement beckoning him,
With look of anxious fear.

From Padua's dome the matin chime
Rang out with silvery tone—
He signed the cross—and looked again,
When, lo ! the form was gone.

Few lusty strokes—the boat is moored—
And cleared the balustrade :
As with light step and throbbing heart,
The summons he obeyed.

The door unclosed, no sound of life
 Broke on the listening ear :
And strange ! it seemed the old man slept
 The open casement near !

Gaston approached—then paused—what sight
 His starting eyeballs met !—
He knew that on the rigid face
 Grim Death his seal had set !

The stony eyes no light revealed,
 The corse lay stark and cold,
And mortal agony had wrung
 Those features sunk and old.

Then Gaston thought upon his dream,
 And shuddered with affright,
When he recalled what shadowy form
 E'en now had met his sight !

Half wild with dread he left the couch—
 In piercing accents called
The household train, and bade them know
 What sight his soul appalled !

There, wrapped in dull unconsciousness,
The Baron Manfred lay ;
And life, it seemed, for aye had fled
That moveless form of clay.

A Leech of fame from Padua came,
Who long essayed, in vain,
To light, by aught that art could teach,
The lamp of life again.

Then Gaston called to mind the pledge
That he so late had given,
To do the pious deed should win
His sire access to heaven.

He bade the attendants quick retire
And leave him with the dead :
And now all feeling, save of awe
And anxious love, was fled.

Slowly he oped the mystic flask,
Long watched with jealous care—
Celestial odours breathed around,
And filled the neighbouring air !

Upon the wrinkled brow he poured
Drops of the precious dew,—
Laid down the flask, and o'er the face
His hand with reverence drew.

When, lo ! beneath his touch, grew warm
The livid cheek of death,
And issuing from the opening lips
He felt returning breath !

Dark clustering locks of glossy hair
Curled o'er the chiselled brow,—
The rosy mouth, the downy cheeks,
Mantled with youthful glow.

Gaston, amazed, drew back in haste,
The table overthrew ;
When dashed upon the marble floor,
The flask in fragments flew.

The lost elixir rose through air,
In clouds of vapour light,
And floating slowly by, ere long
Vanished from mortal sight.

The living head—which, for awhile,
 Surveyed the affrighted boy
With eyes that beamed forth tenderness,
 And hope, and rapturous joy,

Now gnashed the teeth in wild despair,
 And frowned in deadly hate ;
While horror wrung the maddening brain—
 Remorse, that came too late.

The youth, in wild amazement lost,
 Summoned the menial train ;
And cried, " Our sire, we deemed was dead—
 Behold, he breathes again ! " .

In anxious haste they gathered round
 The couch, and witnessed there
A sight that bade their life-blood's stream
 Creep slow with mortal fear !

There lay a living head, affixed
 To trunk as marble cold,—
A face of radiant youth and bloom,
 A body shrunk and old !

It seemed that in the dying throe
The hands had grasped the bed ;
For yet the stiffening joints retained
Their hold, though life was fled.

The blood-stream stood congealed within
The arteries swollen and dark ;
And the rigid and unsightly corse
Lay motionless and stark.

All stood transfixed beside the couch,
And viewed, with silent awe,
The mystic fate of him who thought
To conquer Nature's law.

Big drops of mortal agony
Sprang from the marble brow,
While life's half-wakened principle
Again receded slow.

And while the mouldering trunk began
To pass away to dust,
The glowing tints of life and health
Bloomed o'er the youthful bust.

But Gaston quitted not the couch
While the expiring flame
Of that strange being hovered o'er
The swiftly-wasting frame.

Throughout the long and fearful night
He heard a ghastly tale,
In accents half articulate,
That made his bosom quail.

The pangs of hunger seized their prey—
The spectre shrieked for food—
Raving and curses pierced the air—
“He vow'd *he* shed no blood—”

“That Ugolin, full old, had dropped
Into a timely tomb—
Why came he, then, with glittering eye
To haunt his dying room?”

Soon loathsome reptiles, snake-like things,
Bred in the festering mass,
Began to twine the shapely throat
And o'er the features pass :

Slow crawling on with slimy train,
A thick, innumerable brood,
They fastened on the sentient flesh,
And drank the mantling blood.

Like deadly passions, dark and foul,
That spring the heart within,
To prey upon, and bid it taste
The bitterness of sin—

To batten with insatiate fang
On that which gave them birth,
Till rent with self-created pangs,
It wastes again to earth.

When the third morning dawned again
Came Death to claim his own,
And ere the matin chime was rung,
That spectral life had flown.

They hurried the unhallowed corse
In silence to the grave;
For none did dare to breathe a prayer
The dead man's soul to save!

But Gaston's breast was struck with awe
By all he saw and heard,
And of his sire's mysterious fate
He never uttered word.

Amid old Marli's peaceful shades,
Far from the world's rude strife,
He wore his days in solitude,
A calm yet saddened life.

In frequent deeds of charity,
In deep and fervent prayer,
Life rolled away as rapidly
As amid scenes more fair.

Religion's holy offices
Infused their secret balm
To heal the memory of the past,
And bring the spirit calm !

And when at length his sister died,
And age drew slowly nigh,
He gave his broad domains to found
A stately monastery :

A solemn fane thus marked the spot
Where sinful deeds were done,
Which pious Gaston strove by prayer
And penance to atone.

Then, as the last dim hour approached,
He met the gloomy foe
Without a sigh—for naught was left
That he should prize below.

Gaston the true Elixir found
His sires in vain had sought,
Since, when the hour of doom arrived,
His breast with hope was fraught.

His spirit yearned to pass the tomb,
And, freed, to soar on high,
With frame renewed, again to bloom
In youth and immortality!

ERALINE AND AGNES.

A Tale of Venice, in Three Parts.

“Que dis-je (o vanité des vanités) que parlé-je de la puissance des amitiés de la terre! Voulez-vous, ma cherè fille, en connaître l'étendue? Si un homme revenoit à la lumière quelques années après sa mort, je doute qu'il fût revu avec joie par ceux—la même qui ont donné le plus de larmes à sa mémoire: tant on forme vite d'autres liaisons, tant on prend facilement d'autre habitudes, tant l'inconstance est naturelle à l'homme, tant notre vie est peu de chose, même dans le cœur de nos amis!”—CHATEAUBRIAND.

ERALINE AND AGNES.

Part First.

THE ISLAND.

“ O fairy city of the deep,
 Queen of the Adrian Sea !
How soft thy marble structures sleep,
 As on a mother’s tranquil breast ;
 While winds and waves are hushed to rest,
And midnight zephyrs gently creep
 Over the moonlight sea !”

“ Oh ! thou art lovely, ocean Queen,
 Gem of the Adrian Sea !
While thus at midnight’s hour serene,
 We see thee crest the sparkling tide,
 As mid thy palaces we glide :
Lovely art thou, O Ocean Queen,
 Crown of the Adrian Sea !”

Oft paused the distant Gondolier
When fell that strain upon his ear
In tones so airy sweet, it seemed
Like music we have sometimes dreamed.
Between the echoes faint was heard
The light guitar's soft, whispering chord,
While two fair maidens warbled high
A wild Venetian melody.
The listening deep, that lay at rest,
Bore the weird music on its breast,
As the bark drew near a tree-clad isle
Where towered a vast and hoary pile,
 An abbey dim and lone :
And 'ruder sounds were none to mar
The melody that filled the air,
 Than of the blue sea's moan.

On sped the gondola over the sea,
While sang those maidens joyously,
Their hearts as light, their thoughts as free,
As the bird that sings through the morning sky—
They dreamt not of ill—their breasts were pure,
In guileless innocence secure :
And the spirits' gentle music soared
In fitful strain now merrily,

Or dying low, with plaintive fall ;
Until at length the bark was moored
Amid the trees that darkly towered
High o'er the abbey's wall.

Full oft in summer nights they sought
Those leafy shades, with coolness fraught :
While sighed to rest the evening gale,
They listened to the nightingale,
Or gazed upon the watery waste,
Where the moon her glittering pathway traced.
'T was sweet to breathe the midnight air,
Far from the city's heartless crowd,
Its thousand voices vain and loud,
In that lone, verdant isle, and share
The dreams that to young hearts belong,—
Unconscious of deceit or wrong—
The holy confidence that binds
In magic wreath two noble minds.

One was the Lady Eraline,
The fair and gifted Eraline !
Daughter of Beltro's ducal line,
And mistress of a wide domain,
Where spreads old Padua's fertile plain.

The richest dowered of all the land,
No suitor yet had asked her hand ;
She bare herself amid the crowd,
Gentle and coldly pure, not proud ;
Yet with reserve so sweetly sad,
As each aspiring thought forbade.
Unscared by word or haughty glance,
None yet had dared his suit advance,
But all at humble distance sighed,
Deeming that cold reserve was pride :
Yet none so gently meek as she,
And calm in her humility :
Though rich in every gift could grace,
With nature's boon, her lofty place.
Oh ! she was young and passing fair,
And lovely as the summer-rose,
That breathes, at evening's dying close,
Its rarest perfume on the air.

The other, sprung of gentle blood,
Was Agnes ; heart of blithest mood,
Where no cold, selfish thought abode,
Whence fairy fancies only flowed.
Her smile had that strange witchery,
Which causes many a hopeless sigh.

Beauteous were both, yet different,
 As is the rose and violet's scent.
 They lived as friends who ne'er should part,
 Who shared one undivided heart :
 For their's the tie so strongly binds,
 Equality of lofty minds.

My careless verse may not portray
 What words and thoughts, in airy play,
 The rapid-flying hours beguiled,
 Till purpling dawn at distance smiled—
 None by to chill the spirit's flow,
 Or mar the bosom's genial glow,
 That vanishes ere youth be past,
 Swift as the grape's bloom is effaced.
 Their hearts were like a crystal glass,
 O'er which the thoughts of each would pass
 In quick succession, calling forth
 Thoughts that were rather felt than spoken,
 And breathing more of heaven than earth—
 Though scarcely whispered, understood—
 For oft the silence scarce was broken
 That reigned amid the o'erarching wood.

As thus they held communion high,
 Alone, beneath the summer sky—

While the lulled winds soft music made,
And leaves in fitful cadence played ;
Sudden a rustling sound was heard,
As if some form the branches stirred—
Was it the rising breeze that sighed
Amid the giant pines—then died ?
They listened—sure no thought of guilt
Within those sacred precincts dwelt !—
And save from thence, no pathway led
To that lone nook, but o'er the sea,—
Yet some vague feeling, half of dread,
Crept o'er them imperceptibly.

And now the waning stars grew pale,
As dawn illumed the mountain-steep,
And early morning's fitful gale
Blew freshly o'er the shadowy deep.
The youthful friends who long had sate
Buried in silent reverie,
And heedless of the hour how late,
Now left their seat reluctantly ;
Swift o'er the narrow path they flew,
When, 'mid the thicket, met their view
A stranger's form, in vesture brown,
With belt of rope and monkish gown.

Scared at the sight, they sprang on board,
 The gondoliers the bark unmoored—
 Again they swept the placid sea,
 But neither warbled with wild glee,
 Intent the moments to beguile,
 As when so swift and merrily,
 They neared the tree-clad isle.

The heavens but now unsullied blue,
 Dappled with clouds, and lowering, grew—
 Then heavy vapours brooded o'er
 The darkening sea, and hid the shore :
 A sullen silence filled the air,
 The herald of those storms so rare,
 Yet fearful, in that southern clime,
 Which gathering in the sultry time
 Of summer, 'mid the rocky chain
 Of Alps, o'ersweep the slumbering main,
 And spread destruction far and wide,
 Where, courted by the balmy breeze,
 The gondoliers, unwary, guide
 Their light barks o'er the Adrian seas.

Darker the thickening vapours grew,
 Till nature's form was veiled from view :

Then rolled the thunder faint and far,
Dim echoing through the murky air.
The maidens startled, pale with fear,
Implored the trembling gondolier
With doubled strength to ply the oar,
And, ere too late, regain the shore—
When by the lightning's sudden glare,
Vivid and brief, what saw they there,
Aiding to save the fragile bark,
That quivered on the waters dark?—
The form e'en now had met their sight,
In cowl and hempen girdle dight,
And scared them from the lone retreat,
Where oft before, in converse sweet,
They charmed away the summer night!

Soon as the thunder rolled away,
Began the elemental war;
Loud raged the chainless powers of air,
Sweeping with furious might the bay,
Whose waters late so calmly slept,
That o'er them scarce a zephyr crept.
Big hailstones fell with clattering sound
Upon the straining beams, and drowned
The tempest's voice that howled around.

When each faint hope of life seemed gone,
A cable o'er the prow was thrown,
From a strong-anchored vessel's side,
That rode the waves in gallant pride.
Promptly the stranger seized the line,
Clasping the unconscious Eraline,
With desperate effort swung on board,
While billows heaved and winds loud roared.
Saved by its increased buoyancy,
Scudded the pinnace lightly by,
And, hurried onward by the blast,
Soon on the beach was rudely cast.
The gondoliers quick hauled the craft
Safe from the waves' devouring draught,
Bearing fair Agnes, now alone,
Unconscious that her friend was gone !
Perplexed, amid the storm's wild din,
None knew the fate of Eraline.

When Agnes from her trance awoke,
Cloudless and fair the morn had broke ;
The tempest's wrath was hushed to rest,
Smooth lay the deep's unruffled breast ;
But she to whom her heart was bound,
Sweet Eraline, might not be found !

Wild with despair, she prayed to heaven
To take the life so lately given ;
Then with vain sighs and bitter tears,
Implored the sorrowing gondoliers,
E'en for a moment, to restore
The friend so loved ! They only said,
“ That one, in sacred garb arrayed,
With them had left the island-shore—
They knew him not, but deemed he came,
Unquestioned, in their lady's name ;
They saw him grasp her senseless form,
Ere both had vanished 'mid the storm ! ”

Part Second.

THE NUPTIALS.

Twenty long years have passed away,
And kindly hearts are stilled for aye,
Since the sad night when Eraline
And Agnes left the islet green.

How vast a space to those who look
Towards the dim future, that sealed book,
Whose tablets all would fain peruse,
And thus the fleeting present lose,
In speculations wild and vain
On time that comes aye fraught with pain !

How vast in early youth appears
That gulf, soon past, of twenty years !
Although to him whose mournful gaze
Fondly reverts to happier days,
Careless of those to come, they seem
Transient as morning's wingèd dream,
And fleeting as the lovely June,
Whose flowers and freshness fade so soon !
Vain human life ! which thus is passed
In visions frail as cobweb traced
From leaf to leaf, which e'en a breath
Of summer zephyr scattereth !
Say, if the future were revealed,
And Fate's dark mystery unconcealed,
Who, knowing he were doomed to dwell
Ten lustres on this dreary earth,
Losing the friends he loved so well,
Would not bewail his hour of birth,

And shrink before the joyless waste,
The gloomy vista to be passed,
Ere he shall gain the wished-for rest,
Where care no more shall haunt his breast?
Ah! trust me, life's uncertainty
But bids its sorrows lightly lie,
Giving the weary strength to bear
The burthen all, alas! must share!

'T is evening, and by Brenta's stream,
Amid the leaves, suspended, gleam
Myriads of lamps, whose varied light
Dispels the gathering gloom of night:
And fairy barks glide to and fro,
Gay lanterns hung upon the prow,
Like fire-flies swiftly glancing by,
Then lost in dim obscurity.
Full many a joyous pair is seen
Wandering through the alleys green—
And mirth and music fill the groves,
Where each, intent on pleasure, roves:
Quaint masks of strange device are there,
Grim Turks, and Shepherdesses fair,
Lean Pantaloons, Enchanters old,
And glittering Queens, and Warriors bold.

Long tables 'neath the tents are spread,
Where comers all, with liberal dole,
Strangers and friends alike, are fed—
And sheep and oxen roasted whole—
Vast skins, that gush with purple stream,
Give token 't is no empty dream :
Or scene like this beneath that sky
Had scarce appeared reality.

And all is joy, for Beltro's pride—
His gallant son—hath wed a bride,
To Venice' noblest blood allied,
Which only deemed him equal born,
Whose race the ducal crown had worn.
And Beltro's heir is Agnes' son ;
And well nigh twenty years have gone
Since Beltro Agnes' hand had won.
And none, alas ! had heard again
Of Eraline, long mourned in vain
With bitter tears and anguish deep
That comfort spurned, till years that creep
With ceaseless step had shed their balm,
And, spite of memory's sting, brought calm.
Yet Agnes and her lord would dwell
At times on one they loved so well ;

But other cares their souls engrossed,
Poor Eraline was long since lost,
And Beltro, next of kin, was heir
Of all her lands, and mansions fair.

Alas ! how soon the void is filled
That once the aching bosom chilled !
How soon we learn to view the place
Where lately beamed the kindly face,
The cordial smile of one we loved,
Untenanted, with heart unmoved !
For ever comes the world between
Us and our better thoughts, to wean
The heart from all it prized the most,
When loved the best, the earliest lost !

This eve no time is there to sigh
And weep for her who once had been
The brightest 'mid the festal scene !
And Agnes' heart with joy swells high,
To think her only son, her pride,
Hath won a nobly-dowered bride,
One sprung of regal ancestry :
In beauty too, and maiden thought,
All that a mother's prayer had sought.

And every heart seems blithe this night—
 Over the green turf, twinkling feet,
 To joyous strains responsive beat :
 From thousand tapers, floods of light
 High through the palace windows stream,
 And o'er the eddying waters gleam :
 From distant woods the mellowing tone
 Of horns sometimes is heard alone ;
 And then loud strains of melody
 Of harps and hautboys fill the sky,
 Alternate with the rebec's sound,
 Waking the wandering echoes round,
 And all is mirth and revelry.

Among the gay and motley throng
 Is one who heeds not harp or song,
 But wanders with dejected air,
 Unmindful of that scene so fair,
 While tears adown her pale cheeks stray,
 As if her thoughts were far away,
 And wrapped in memories of the past—
 When other forms the dance had graced,
 Or wandered with her by the stream,
 In days gone by, that vanished like a dream !

Slow creeps she on, exhausted, spent,
Hollow her cheek, her form how bent !
Who, in those features, worn, yet fine,
The line-drawn forehead, once divine,
The tattered dress, and humbled mien,
Would know the high-born Eraline ?
And yet 't is she who comes alone
To her ancestral halls, unknown—
Forgotten, and unwelcomed, there,
Though mistress of that lordship fair !

Poor Eraline ! thy care-worn face,
And faded eye, reveal the trace
Of many a sorrow past :
And thou hast suffered, till thy breast
Wrung with the woes that heavy pressed,
Had well-nigh drooped at last—
But that amid the dungeon's gloom,
A dream of hope still haunted thee
One day to quit thy living tomb,
And, with life bright before thee, free,
To meet thy friend, no more to part,
And clasp her to thy faithful heart !

Thus buoyed, her spirit soared 'mid all
 The horrors of her merciless thrall :
 Nor threats, nor tortures e'en, had power
 To move her pure and lofty soul,
 Or bend her to his fierce control,
 Who sought to win her princely dower :
 Until her baffled foe was slain
 In foray rude, amid the chain
 Of hills that skirt the Adrian main.
 Unheeded then she took her way
 To Fano, where a vessel lay,
 Freight for Venice' marble strand
 By which she gained her native land :
 Buying her safety with the price
 Of a signet ring of quaint device,
 A pledge of love by Agnes given
 In days when earth seemed all but heaven !

As the worn Pilgrim slow draws nigh
 Her ancient home, what thoughts arise
 Blinding with tears those faded eyes !
 She hears the sounds of revelry,
 Admires the myriad lights that gleam,
 Reflected in the silvery stream—
 She sees the masks trip gaily by—

Alas ! 't is not to welcome *her*,
The long-forgotten wanderer !
And she, in childhood, oft had flown,
Bounding with joy, dark care unknown,
Through these green alleys, once her own !
Now she returns with years matured,
Perchance to be disowned ! her heart
Seared with the bitter wrongs endured,
And memories which shall ne'er depart !

But hark ! from far and near, the cries
Of joyous welcome rend the skies,
Mingled with hautboys clear, and drums—
Quick through the crowd a path is made,
For lo ! the lord of Beltro comes,
In senatorial pomp arrayed.
Leaning upon his arm, the Bride,
With timid mien, trips by his side ;
Attired in robe of virgin white,
She glances by like form of light,
Or moonlit vapour through the night.
The wreath of pearls that binds her hair,
Shows than her brow less purely fair.
Shunning the gaze of those around,
Her beauteous eyes oft seek the ground,

As on she passes 'mid the throng,
That pours its welcome loud and long.
Then ~~The~~ next the Lady Agnes came,
Now grown a stately-figured dame :
Yet with the smile unchanged, the eye
That scarce had lost its witchery :
And all unlike the wasted form
She passed so near, her breath was warm
Upon the pallid cheek that bore
No lingering trace of days of yore !
And as she glided graceful by,
With smile of winning courtesy
Saluted oft the curious crowd,
That rent the air with plaudits loud.
While on they sweep in princely state,
One of the liveried train elate,
With brutal force and scornful sneer
Repulsed the stranger, who, too near
Had pressed upon his lady's path,
And thus aroused his wonton wrath—
That stranger-guest was Eraline,
Who those broad lands might claim and win !

Ah ! who but knows, when droops the heart,
As one by one its dreams depart,

How the most worthless, worldly thing,
A shadow o'er its hopes can fling,
Chilling to silence evermore
The fervent love it yearns to pour !
And Eraline shrunk back in haste
While on the nuptial cortége passed :
Her breast with anguish sore was wrung,
And " Agnes !" died upon her tongue,
In accents scarcely audible,
Nor heard by her she loved so well !
Then bitter tears coursed down her cheek—
Trembled that form so worn and weak :
Again, she found herself alone,
Lost in the crowd, unmarked, unknown.

Amid the pangs that thrilled her heart,
 Flashed stern conviction o'er the brain,
Bidding the hopes of years depart—
 How fondly-cherished, yet how vain !
The present passed before her eye,
 In all its drear reality.
In contrast to the visions bright
That erst had cheered her dungeon's night,
 'Mid sorrow and captivity !
For then she dreamt of Agnes free
As in their days of youthful glee,

When all her secret thoughts were known,
Fast as they rose, to her alone :
But not of Agnes, bound by ties
New-formed since then, and sympathies,
And cares, in which she owned no part,
Nor power to take them to her heart.

Yes, he who loves, too surely finds
Some worldly obstacle appears,
Of might to sever generous minds,
As far asunder as the spheres !
And Eraline, high-souled and true,
To all her visions bade adieu :
And shrank, yet scarcely knowing why,
From Agnes, loved so constantly !
She felt that time and chance had placed
A gulf between might not be passed,
Dividing hearts once closely twined
In wreath of love they deemed for aye would bind.

Delusion vain ! the sordid world,
With all its web of trivial cares,—
Self-interest, too, that never spares,
Now came between the friends, and hurled
Down from her pinnacle of thought
Poor Eraline ! and sadly taught

How stronger than the loving heart
Is the cold world—how soon depart
Before its chilling breath, the dreams of youth,
The trust, so hard to lose, in others' truth !

Ah ! did they last, such dreams would make
This earth a heaven, which to forsake
Would bid the lingering soul repine,
Nor hope for aught of more divine—
Would chain the spirit, born to soar,
'Mid things of earth, to mount no more !
But death and change for ever come
To tell us earth is not our home,
And teach the wandering thoughts to rise
To a far land beyond the skies !

The Pilgrim dared no more advance,
Scared by the happy, careless glance,
Which spoke a heart from sorrow free,
Yet marked for others' woes perchance,
A tone of thoughtless apathy ;
And she, the broken-spirited,
Whose joyous spring for aye was fled,
Resolved, henceforth no sympathy
'Twixt their divided hearts might be :

Could one be welcome there, who came
That goodly heritage to claim?
What if she were repulsed—denied—
Like base intruder thrust aside!
Such cruel thought o'erflowed her eyes,
Then bade her native spirit rise,
Until the life-blood mantled o'er
That cheek and brow so pale before!
It was the last faint spark of pride
Her gentle bosom knew—and soon it died!

And now it seemed all hope was flown,
And the lone Pilgrim doubly lone:
She felt as one who, toiling o'er,
By night, a wild and trackless moor,
Beholds at length the one star fade
Which 'mid the gloom benignly played,
Leaving all wrapped in blackest night,
No friendly gleam to lend its light:
Who with despair subdued and chilled,
And heart with boding terrors filled,
No longer dares the path pursue,
'Mid perils shrouded from the view;
Till, when no hope below seems given,
The fainting spirit turns to Heaven;

When soon the glorious orb of day
Rises to chase each darksome thought away.

Stricken and weary, Eraline
Fled eagerly the festive scene ;
Until through distance ceased to come
Upon her ear the busy hum
Of revelry. With haggard eye,
That oft looked backward anxiously,
The harassed wanderer hurried on :
At last, exhausted, trembling, wan,
She sought the moss-entangled ground,
And, spell-bound by the leaves' light sound,
Soon in deep slumber brief oblivion found.

Part Third.

THE CONVENT.

When Eraline awoke, the beams
Of dawn had tipped the hills with light,
Scattering darkness and the dreams
That follow on the gloomy night :

The world seemed fresh as in its prime,
 Unaltered by the waste of Time ;
 And the worn Pilgrim tasted all
 The pure delight, forgotten long,
 Of Nature's matin festival :
 She heard the lark's high rapturous song,
 And traced the course of fuming brook,
 Emerging now from leafy nook,
 Then lost to sight, as on it played,
 Amid the thicket's deepening shade :
 While round the mountain's towering brow,
 The mists of morning gathered slow,
 And hung in many a vaporous wreath,
 Unruffled by the gentle breath
 Of morn that swept the vales below,
 And wafted fragrance from the fields,
 Or stole the scent the citron yields.

Amid her reverie profound
 Swelled high an organ's pealing sound :
 And then a chorus soft, yet clear,
 In strain sublime fell on her ear,
 Of feeling so devout and high
 As thrilled her soul to ecstasy !
 And she who loved sweet music well,
 Now owned her deepest, holiest spell,

As 'mid those scenes, at that calm hour,
Sounded her voice with magic power,
Breathing the seraph-notes of fire
She pours when heavenly themes inspire.

And soon the lone one knew whence came
The pious strain that soared to Heaven,
Praying that sin might be forgiven
In the blest Redeemer's name!
'T was from a convent's modest fane—
She listened, rapt in thought profound,
And hope arose that not in vain,
A resting place might now be found
From the rude world—a calm retreat,
A home for broken spirits meet!

It chanced the Abbess was allied
To her who asked a refuge there :
With nought of stern, conventual pride,
She dropped for woe the ready tear—
A good and guileless spirit she,
And clad in sweet humility.
Ne'er dreaming whom she raised and blessed,
She gave the suppliant food and rest :
And who, in truth, in that mean dress,
That air familiar with distress,

The peerless maid again had known,
Who once amid the noblest shone,
Supreme in grace and loveliness !

The holy mother wondering heard
A tale her gentle bosom stirred—
How Eraline, the proudly born,
The gifted one, the favoured fair,
Of an illustrious line the heir,
Was borne away 'mid foes, forlorn,
Condemned to waste her youthful bloom
Alone amid a dungeon's gloom,
To know death's bitterness, and hope
Deferred, that bade her spirit droop ;
Until by blank despair dismayed,
For welcome death she often prayed—
How when her ruthless captor knew
That force was powerless to subdue,
He left her, as he deemed, for aye
To pine concealed from light of day,
Her food the prisoner's scanty fare,
And 'mid such hardship as had wrung
The life of one less brave to bear—
But that she ever fondly clung
To the dear hope one day to share

The communings of other days,
When life shone fair in hope's pure rays.

The Abbess heard the mournful tale
Attested by that cheek so pale;—
Embraced her oft with tearful eye;
And pledged herself to secrecy:
And she had known her trials too,
Had ample cause the world to rue:
And knew how vain a thing it were,
Though to the careless eye so fair—
How like a rose whose bloom soon gone,
By the rude tempest scattered wide,
Presents its rankling thorns alone,
Whose sharpness all some time have tried.
She clasped the wearied to her breast,
And spoke to her of peace and rest,
And promised "that sublime repose
Which holy trust in Heaven bestows,
Teaching the heart that fain would love,
To rest its faith on things above,
Nor waste its wealth on idols but of clay,
Which all must change ere long, and pass away."

As time rolled on, the wanderer knew,
 How all the Abbess spake was true !
 And each succeeding morn that dressed
 In purple light the mountain's brow,
 Waking a voice on every bough,
 Brought solace to her weary breast :
 The very flowers that sprung beneath
 Her path, and poured their fragrant breath—
 The murmuring brook—the lofty pine—
 The creeping shrub—the clustering vine,
 Were friends that failed not, free from guile,
 Who ever wore their sweetest smile
 For *her*, the sorrowful and lone,
 Whose early friends were changed or gone !

And when the choral anthem rose,
 Pealing in high, seraphic strain,
 Almost she seemed to hear again,
 Amid the swell, the voice of those,
 Whose care had watched her infancy,
 In well-known accents floating by :
 As if to their blest aid 't were given,
 To waft the pious song to Heaven !

No dream of cold ambition broke
That holy train of thought, or woke
One vain regret for all she lost—
Her life was as a stream that long
Its troubled course hath wound among
Steep Alpine rocks, in white foam tost—
Till safe in some blue, sheltered lake,
Whose surface no rude storms awake,
Its placid waters lie at rest,
With heaven reflected in their breast.

And Eraline disdained to break,
For lands or gold, the worldly dream
Of Agnes, once her friend, or take
The dower her son had learnt to deem
His sire's, his own—a solemn vow
She made that Agnes ne'er should know,
Till death approached, how she had come
Unknown, forgotten, to that long-lost home!

Perchance her early friend was true,—
With glad surprise had welcomed her :
But Eraline, alas ! well knew
How rarely generous feelings stir

The heart by worldly cares engrossed,
 Whose ancient memories soon are lost,
 Or dimmed amid the changeful train
 Of empty dreams, ambitions vain !
 No more the dear one cared to roam
 Far from the happy, peaceful home
 Which Heaven bestowed—There sorrow free
 'Mid loftier thoughts, 't was sweet to dwell
 On the far days she loved so well.
 To think were spurned for Agnes' sake
 The broad domain 't were hers to take
 Again, had she appeared to claim
 The honours of her princely name.
 Thus calm content at length was given ;
 And sure that every selfish thought
 Conquered within, her spirit brought
 Near and more near to Heaven,
 The wanderer, long by fortune crossed,
 Though poor, was rich in that she lost.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE VOICES OF THE PAST.

Where are the voices of the Past, that long have died away—
The bright dreams of the golden time of childhood's early day?—
The kindly looks and tones that haunt, in vain, the yearning heart—
The friends so loved from whom we soon, too soon, were doomed to part?

We may not know, and none shall tell, where dwell the loved and kind—
The friends of old, whose memory lives within the heart enshrined—
Who once knew all our secret thoughts, and soothed each passing care—
With whom we dwelt in holy love, and knelt in silent prayer!—

Who oft in voiceless reverie, for words to speak too deep,
Would soar with us to realms afar, beyond yon azure steep—
Ah! where are they whose memories live deep-graven in the breast,
And whom with many a bitter tear, we lost when loved the best?

Be sure that where the shadow rests the form still lingers near ;
And they whose influence awes thy soul, in death still hold thee dear :
And deem not those who knew with thee life's fair and fleeting morn,
Have vanished into gloomy night, from light and being torn.

We pour the red and glowing draught—it leaves no trace behind—
We break the cup—the fragments fly upon the viewless wind :
But love is as the light of day, which, though it disappears,
Still beams perchance unknown to us 'mid bright and distant spheres !

STANZAS

ON A STATUE OF DIANA AT THE LOUVRE.

From what fair land of poesy wert thou brought,
A messenger of elder Time ?
Thou seem'st to beckon from an age remote,
Whose very fragments are sublime.
Cam'st thou from where the blue Ægean wave
Once mirrored in its depths the cities of the brave ?

Or from Trinacria's ever fertile shore,
Laved by the immemorial sea,
Whose waters on their breast once proudly bore
The conquering legions of the Free?
A relic thou of that immortal race,
Whose deeds in arts and arms no time can e'er efface.

Perchance thy place, long ages past, was near
The margin of some Grecian stream,
From whose melodious wavelets, crystal clear,
Flashed o'er thy breast a sunny gleam
Of thine own cloudless skies, O virgin Queen!
Amid the tremulous shade of the dark cypress green.

Or stood'st thou 'neath some lofty portico
Where met the eloquent of old—
The gifted of the Past! whose fame shall go
Still fresh to ages yet untold—
Who there, in words of fire which ne'er may die,
Oft charmed the listening air with deep-voiced harmony?

Was the great fane of Ephesus thy home?
Where Nations crowded once to kneel,
And gazed in silence on the wondrous dome,
Whose site no mouldering piles reveal,—
And mark where towered the marvel of the world,
E'er time the massy walls in crumbling ruin hurled.

Or Argive maidens, hand in hand, have tripped
 In circling mazes at thy feet ;
And white-robed priests the votive altars dipped
 In blood of goats thy offering meet ;
While amber-dropping wreaths bedecked the shrine,
And the rapt votary knelt, and owned thy power divine.

Still hast thou smiled, with calm, unconscious grace,
 While Empires round thee rose and fell :
And busy spirits which have left no trace,
 Or name, or deed behind, to tell
They walked the earth for their appointed span,
Have lived and passed away—so vain a thing is man !

Thou hast looked on, unaltered and serene,
 Amid the rage and wrecks of Time :
And show'st as moving yet with airy mien,
 And braided locks, and crest sublime :
Loose on the breeze thy goddess vesture streams,
As when the essential thought broke on the Master's dreams !

But he, to whose inspirèd art was given
 The type of Beauty to unfold,
Who, fired with the Promethean spark from Heaven,
 Informed the ideal majesty of mould—
Patient, wore out, perchance, long years of toil,
Ere on his ravished sight beamed that celestial smile.

With rapture, not of earth, oft would he dwell
Upon thine opening promise fair ;
And, gazing, deem at last some mystic spell
Had power to bid thee tread the air ;
Till on his eye thy perfect charm awoke,
In guise that to the soul of his Elysium spoke !

And still through rolling ages, Huntress Maid !
Wilt thou pursue the mimic chase,
Still, dight in loveliness that ne'er shall fade,
Reveal the imagined form of Grace.
O soul of Art ! from elder Time to day,
Thou com'st in Beauty's power, triumphant o'er decay !

NEGLECTED GENIUS.

Oh ! thou of many gifts, why art thou lone ?
Why wanderest thou amid the throng
With timid step, unhonoured and unknown,—
Thou to whom glorious thoughts belong ?

Thy mien is chastened and thy spirit meek ;
Yet sometimes in the Poet's eye,
When thou dost deem that none are near thee, speak
The dreams of immortality !

And hast thou then no friend whom thou mayest love—
Abides no kindred spirit here—
May not that smile so sad, appealing, move
One gentle breast to hold thee dear ?

But why should'st thou alone, neglected live,
Who stealest thus unheeded by ?
Is it because the world may ne'er forgive
The soul's superiority ?

Thou might'st be rich in worldly gifts, and high
In place, and then the sordid crowd
Would mark thy presence with obsequious eye,
And flatter with applauses loud.

But having that nor wealth nor birth can give—
Genius, the noblest gift of Heaven—
A dower to bid thy name through ages live,
Art thou from sweet communion driven ?

If the world scorn thee, give back scorn for scorn!
 But thou art gentle, gifted one!
 And though rejected, in thy breast forlorn
 Springeth a fount of love unknown.

Oh! did the thoughtless care to touch the string
 That sighs unheard within thy heart,
 What rapture to thee, dear one! would it bring,
 What stream of heavenly sound impart!

In vain thy bosom yearns for sympathy,
 Thou, gifted with creative power!—
 And that most sighed for, wanting still to thee,
 Thy genius is a barren dower.

'Tis not for thee to find a refuge here;
 Thy home is in the skies—and thou
 Must shine afar, a planet in thy sphere,
 And men will to thine influence bow.

Walk on unconscious, lonely and unknown!
 Thou deem'st the world is fair and true—
 The hearts of others noble as thine own—
 Nor know'st ~~the~~ the treachery thou might'st rue.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

And the forlorn, deserted one,
The outcast of the earth,
Looking on thee feels not *all* lone,
O! flower of little worth :
She sees thee smile, neglected too,
And thinks it is for her,
Who knows no living friend below—
The homeless wanderer !
faint and worn —
She pauses, ~~lost in thought~~—a tear
Steals down the faded cheek,
As solemn thoughts of import dear
To her lone bosom speak :
Then, little floweret! bloom and droop,—
Not vain thy transient day ;
Since thou hast power to bless with hope
The wanderer's dreary way !

LINES

"Eheu, fugaces, Postume, Postume,
Labuntur anni."

Yes, swift and light our spring-time flies,
Like summer stream in June,
And bright the merry season hies,
Till comes the glowing noon !

But all too soon the odour's gone,
The hopes of early youth,
The fairy dreams for ever flown—
The trust in others' truth.

Mid age creeps on—more sadly flows
The lingering stream of life—
Dark and more dark our pathway grows,
More fierce the worldly strife.

It is the shadow of the grave
Lies heavy o'er our path,
And glooms with doubt the heart most brave,
And chills our wavering faith.

Though ever deeper lours the shade
That veils in cloud the tomb—
On, Spirit on, be not dismayed,
There's light beyond the gloom !

SONG OF THE CAPTIVE ROBBER.

FROM THE RUSSIAN.

Hush ! hush ! green forest, cease to pour

Faint murmurs on mine ear :

Thy voice, which I may hear no more,

Speaks sadly of the days of yore,

Troubling my wandering thoughts with fear ;

And on the morrow I must stand

Before the mighty Tzar, with blood-stained hand !

The terrible Tzar will say to me,

“ Answer me well, my child !

And be thy breast from terror free—

Son of a peasant ! tell to me

Who, in the forest lone and wild,

Were joined with thee in lawless strife,

The chosen comrades of thy robber-life ? ”

And I will answer, “ Mighty Tzar !

The truth now deign to know :

Companions four had I, O Tzar !

The darksome night—my scimitar—

My trusty steed—my bended bow :

These were my four companions, Sire :—

My messengers—darts hardened in the fire ! ”

Then will the Christian Tzar reply :

“ Honour to thee, my son !

Who brav’st the law so fearlessly,

Yet know’st to speak so craftily :

Meet guerdon hast thou bravely won,

For lo ! a palace waits thee on the plain—

A stately gibbet, and a hempen chain ! ”

ANGEL WHISPERINGS.

Angel whisperings, faint and low,

Float on the midnight breeze,

Like summer airs that fitful blow

Amid the spell-bound trees.

Reclining on a grassy bed,

Methinks again I hear

The lingering voices of the dead,

In Angel whisperings near.

When thought is stilled, and dreams of old
Visit the harassed breast,
Thrilling the heart, grown sad and cold,
With many a grief opprest,—
Then Angel whisperings seem to pass
At midnight's solemn hour,
Stirring around the long tall grass
With strange, mysterious power.

THE EXILE'S SONG.

My home is far—the sea rolls deep
'Twixt me and that dear land,
Where the lost friends of childhood sleep,
The once glad household band!
And I, the last, a wanderer lone,
My days in exile wear:
And e'en the very wish is gone
To view that home so fair!

For stranger-forms abide beneath
The roof which sheltered those,
The loved of old, who, calm in death,
Now take their last repose—
And they whose merry laugh pealed high
Through those old walls are dumb—
Brave hearts that throbbed triumphantly,
Now moulder in the tomb.

•

Ah me! 'tis strange to think upon
The scenes of long-left homes,
For one who treads, abandoned, lone,
A pathway lined with tombs—
To call to mind the days long past,
And those who made so dear
That home, alas! a dreary waste,
Since none who loved are there!

'Tis better sure to linger here
Where no sad memories cling,
Where nought calls forth the bitter tear,
The sigh that cannot bring
Back to our longing eyes the friends
So loved, and loved in vain;
With many a fond regret that rends
With unavailing pain.

And now my heart hath nought whereon
To rest its baffled faith ;
The trust in others' love is gone,
What friend remains but Death !
For he can ope the cloudy gate
That guards the better land—
And where, for me, perchance await
The long-lost household band !

THE WANDERING BIRD.

From what far land beyond the sea,
Bright stranger ! art thou come,
On light wing borne so merrily
Above the restless foam ?
Alone thou com'st o'er many a mile
Of waters, on whose breast,
No verdant isles of refuge smile
To give the wanderer rest !

Over yon bleak and frowning waste
Of billows thou hast flown,
Where conquering man no path hath traced,
Unguided and alone :
And now thou sing'st on yonder tree
As if it were a home,
Familiar in thine infancy
Ere thou had'st learnt to roam !

What message bear'st thou from the land,
Which thou hast left afar—
Who bade thy airy wings expand
To dare the tempest's war ?
Hast thou no mate on that far shore,
No link to bind thee there,
Or did'st thou from the dull earth soar
To seek a land more fair ?

“ As fair as this the land I left,
The wooded dells as green—

- The vine-clad hills in twain are cleft,
And a stream runs clear between—
And blue the skies, and bright the wings
That flutter through the glade,
And sweet the song the night-bird sings
Amid the myrtle-shade.”

“ No message bear I from the land,
From whence I came, alone,—
Yet guided by an unseen hand,
For purpose not mine own :
Bidding me seek an unknown shore,
And dare the trackless sky—
Beneath my flight the ocean’s roar,
And glittering worlds on high—”

“ To tell perchance that He who guides
The swallow’s airy path,
As borne on pinion frail she glides
Amid the billow’s wrath,
Will, from His seat beyond the sky,
Regard the mourner’s tear,
And look on all with loving eye,
The race to Him most dear !”

THE MEETING.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHULZE.

He creeps amid the hurrying crowd,
With feeble step and haggard eye ;
Regard him well—ere long the shroud
Must wrap those limbs—for death is nigh !

Once bloomed in that pale cheek the rose,
With health, and hope, and fancy's train ;
Once from that bosom, torn with woes,
Shot bounding life through every vein !

Behold ! with lightsome step and gay,
A smiling maiden trips along,
Her days are in their joyous May,
To her no gloomy cares belong.

The light of her soft child-like eye
Beams as with fairy visions fraught.
And, as she flits unheeded by,
His look awakes no mournful thought !

For the first time they meet to-day ;
They ne'er shall meet on earth again !
Fired, startled by the kindling ray,
Long looks he after her in vain.

And scarce she seems to touch the ground,
While hastening on with careless grace—
Nor stays to cast one glance around,
Or mark that pallid, grief-worn face !

But he—long-faded joys revive,
Transport, so full, dilates his heart !
And he would fain begin to live
Now, when he must from life depart.

A flower springs in his dying breast ;
But she is gone, and little deems
That her sweet image, lingering, blessed
With heavenly light his last lone dreams !

LINES.

Thy placid look—some well-remembered grace—
The gentle smile that haunted thy dear face—
Which e'en when hard injustice bade thee weep,
And anguish bowed thy spirit, left its trace,
Like rainbow based upon the troubled deep—
That smile revisits me as Time flies on—
(Time, who still finds us sadder and more lone—)
The symbol of a spirit strong in faith—
I saw it last when thou wert calm in death.
Its memory lives, and oft 'mid gathering grief
Brings to the aching heart a sad relief,—
Telling of one who on her anxious way,
Looked forward to the goal without dismay.

O friends of youth! a dim and shadowy host—
For once we deemed *all* friends—too early lost,
Or vanished 'mid the cold and heartless throng,
And doomed to bear the slight—the bitter wrong.—
Perchance amid the world's dark strife, like me,
Ye love to dwell on her whose placid smile
And angel-voice were powerful to beguile
The transient griefs of helpless infancy :—
Whose accents gravely sweet, and fond regard,
Still haunt the breast when sorrow presses hard :
Bringing from other days a mournful light—
A dream of those far times when all around seemed bright!

LINES.

Ah! once we met with lightsome heart,
And salutation gay,
And ever looked, when we should part,
To meet another day!
And had we dreamt one moon would change
Without a friendly meeting,
We should have deemed it passing strange,
To miss that kindly greeting!

But colder ever grows the heart
Amid the storm of Time—
And all too soon, alas! depart
Our dreams of vernal prime:
And yet we scarcely mourn their loss—
Perchance at times we pour
A fleeting sigh when memories cross
Our thoughts of days of yore.

Who, then, to earth would fondly cling,
When all that made it blest
We see around us vanishing,
E'en when 't is loved the best?
As one by one, for aye, depart,
Ere yet old age is near,
The brave illusions of the heart,
In glowing youth so dear?

Like him who o'er Arabian wastes
Where, thinly scattered, smile
The green oases, cheerful hastes
To win some shady isle,
Which shone afar in the morning's sun,
A leafy bower of rest,
Inviting him, his travel done,
To slumber safe and blest—

Who through the blazing noon slow toils,
Lured by that mirage fair,
Which still at equal distance smiles
Through the pale evening air—
Night lours—yet still his straining eye
No refuge sees at hand,
Till, spent, he lays him down to die
Upon the unsheltered sand—

So we in early youth set forth
Upon our joyous way :
And dreams whose truth we never doubt,
Beguile with treacherous ray :
But as the darksome goal we near,
Like to the desert's isle,
Life's early visions disappear,
Or still at distance smile.

THE LAND.

The land!—the land! our wild hearts beat,
To hear that cry, to wanderers sweet,
Who long have sailed the treacherous sea,
'Mid peril and uncertainty—
The land! what dreams of happy rest,
That word brings to the weary breast!

Long have we ploughed the trackless main,
And prayed to hear that cry in vain—
Long braved the angry billows' shock,
The dangers of the hidden rock;
And deemed the hours crept slowly by,
With nought around but sea and sky.

But swift we near the wished-for shore,
And ocean's perils daunt no more—
We sigh to meet the friends so dear,
We long since left with many a tear—
Yet now a thousand fears arise,
More chilling than those stormy skies!

The land! the land! ah, who may tell
What holds that land he loves so well!
Are the warm hearts of old still there—
Deserted homes we once deemed fair—
The kindly voice—the welcome smile
That could each saddening thought beguile?

The land! the land! Then let us on!
And should we find the loved ones flown,
Another land we yet may gain,
Where we perchance shall meet again—
Then courage, comrades, trim your sail,
Nor shrink to meet the threatening gale!

AIRY DREAMS.

Airy dreams that long have vanished,
Come again on glittering wing:
O'er my soul, whence joy is banished,
Some bright gleams of beauty fling!

Life without ye is but sorrow,
Dull and dreary creeps the day,
Slowly changing to the morrow
Once so decked in colours gay!

Airy dreams that come from Heaven,
Cheer once more the weary breast,
Dreams that care hath long since driven
From my heart, with woes opprest.

In this world ye are but fleeting,
Yet not less your influence bright,
Life of many a dark thought cheating,
Ye are star-beams 'mid the night.

Come, ye wingèd dreams of gladness,
Though for one brief, fleeting morn,
Come to scatter rooted sadness,
Light with hope the breast forlorn.

Lift my soul above the valley
Where abide the shades of death—
Lend the spirit time to rally,
Give the weary, world-worn, breath.

PÆSTUM.

Sweet odours float upon the gale,
More fragrant than the flowers
That droop in northern climates pale,
'Mid distant English bowers :
But Death rides heavy on the tainted air,
Like sin disguised in form of beauty rare.

Stand we upon enchanted ground—
Is this some Genii's work
That crowns the spot where crimes abound,
And ruthless spoilers lurk,
Profaning oft with deeds of darkest guilt
The spot where once a noble people dwelt ?

Fair temple ! vowed in elder time
To him who ruled the sea,
When Art was in her wondrous prime,
And Greece was brave and free ;
Full many a tale you tell of glories past,
Of men of might, whose memory did not last.

Though crowds that in the olden day
 Knelt awe-struck in thy fane
Have unremembered passed away,
 Thy columns still remain,
To tell that Faith sincere, but scarce divine,
Lived in those distant times, and reared a gorgeous shrine.

TWILIGHT.

How oft at evening's dreamy fall
 The memory of departed friends
Comes o'er the spirit, soothing all
 Dark cares to transient rest, and lends
A fitful joy to gathering thought,
A fleeting gleam with rapture fraught !

As fast we near life's gloomy night,
 When age draws on and hope is fled,
Oh ! it is sweet to stay the flight
 Of Time, and muse on days long sped,
And dream the lost again are here,
Oft wept with many a bitter tear.

Oh night! the age of Time art thou;
Thy solemn influence recalls
A wandering echo, sweet and low,
That o'er the heart like music falls,
Bidding it yearn with fond regret
For those whom we may meet e'en yet!

And as the deepening shadows brood
In various darkness o'er the land,
Veiling in gloom the hoary wood,
Weird Fancy waves her airy wand,
Peopling with forms of other days
The leafy glens and haunted ways.

STANZAS.

O river! gliding by on silvery wing
From distant realms unknown:
Through many a varied landscape murmuring,
Thou com'st alone!

Though mighty streams their plenteous tribute pay
To swell thy regal tide,
Yet still unchanged thou mak'st thy forceful way,
In solitary pride.

So through the world a noble spirit takes
Its lofty course, alone,—
Scarce mingling with the crowd whose voice awakes
No answering tone.

Yes, single in thy loveliness, to thee
Is no companion given ;
Yet o'er thy breast, the willows droop, and see
Another Heaven.

And o'er the mountains purple vineyards gleam,
Fed by thy gentle dew ;
And flowers wave near the margin of thy stream
And in it view

Their imaged beauty, as it were a glass
That bids all fair appear,
Mirrored in thee, as thy sweet waters pass,
A current clear—

Seeking the home where they at length shall rest,
 Their wandering journey o'er,
In the wide ocean's dark unfathomed breast,
 Far from the shore.

In what romantic land had'st thou thy birth—
 Fair stream! whence comest thou?
Was it where Alpine mountains soar from earth,
 In wreath of snow?

And then a brooklet swift, with merry sound
 Exulting would'st thou leap
From rock to rock, and bid the vale resound,
 And vine-clad steep.

Or steal o'er level plains, till strength matured,
 Thou speed'st thy joyous way:
Like buoyant youth, with eager hope assured,
 That spurns delay.

Through rugged crags that tower with shaggy brow—
 Thy billows white with foam—
Thou hurriest on, in wild, impetuous flow,
 To seek thy home.

But 'mid calm vales and fertile pastures green
Thou gently glidest by :
Reflected then upon thy breast are seen
The woods and sky.

So we in solitude, and spirit-free,
Like thee, bright-flowing Rhine !
Oft deep within the heart faint shadows see
Of things divine.

Here would I, resting on thy verdant slopes,
My twilight vigil keep,
Still pondering on the past, o'er ruined hopes,
In thought too deep

For utterance ; or hold communion high
With Nature's self—and find
A voice of strange, mysterious melody
In the low wind—

That comes and goes, none knoweth whence or where,
With music on its wings,
And softly rising on the dreamy air,
A message brings

Of other days,—though dimly understood,—
To still the mind to calm :
Pouring into the heart, to peace subdued,
A healing balm !

And in the wandering voices of the stream—
The wind's low, fitful sigh—
Come notes of love, and childhood's happy dream,
And friends of days gone by !

SONG OF THE DYING MINSTREL.

Oh ! lay me low amid the leaves
Upon the long, tall grass ;
For yet my lingering spirit cleaves
Vainly to things which soon, alas !
I quit for aye, with all their store
Of memories dear of days of yore !

In far-gone times, how oft ! a child,
 With heart untamed and free,
Have I, in frolic mood and wild,
 Upclimed yon widely-spreading tree !
Which now sheds leaves to strew a bed
Whereon to rest my dying head.

Her hand my tottering steps oft led
 In childhood's helpless day,
To yon low seat with moss o'erspread,
 On which the leaves' light shadows play :
Who watched me with a mother's eye,
So tenderly yet mournfully !

And oft in boyhood I have played,
 The day's dull labours done,
Beneath this loved, familiar shade,
 While slowly sunk the evening sun :
And gazed in wonder as each star
Hung out its mystic lamp afar :

Or listened to the limpid brook
 That gaily warbled by,
Emerging from yon leafy nook
 With wild and joyous melody :—
And marked how fair the moon's soft beam
Would play upon the dimpling stream !

'T is past—life's latest hour is come—

Oh ! let me hear again

The leaves—the wild bee's drowsy hum—

The brook—the linnet's woodland strain—

The well-known sounds whose music woke

The spell that time hath never broke.

Oh lay me here—for I have known

In this retreat, so dear !

Ere the bright days of youth were flown,—

And tear chased on each bitter tear,

How sweet the breath of morning seemed,

How fair the early dawning beamed !

And now, methinks, again I see

Dim shapes amid the glade—

Angelic forms that beckon me

From the thick wood's deepening shade !

Are these the friends once known so well—

And loved far more than words can tell ?

I come ! and we shall part no more—

Ah ! speed my struggling soul !

One pang—and all will soon o'er,

And I beyond stern death's control—

Still, still I see ye 'mid the gloom—

Approach more near—I come, I come !

THE WATERS OF BABYLON.

The sultry day is spent, the night is fair,
Arabian perfumes load the scented air :
And evening's balmy gales that gently rise,
Fan the worn frame, and breathe of Paradise—
The Eden where our primal father dwelt
Unstained as yet, unknown to shame and guilt.
The flowery trees of Shinar's bounteous land,
Stirred by the breeze, wave o'er Euphrates' strand ;
Who, murmuring soft, his summer music lends
Alike to cheer the Prince, and him who bends
Exhausted, sad, beneath the weight of toil,
Far from Judæa's land, his native soil.
The grand clouds move in solemn march on high,
With noiseless pace, in mystic majesty :
Unveiling fitfully the large-orbed moon
Which fast ascends the ethereal vault, till soon
The face of Heaven from misty shroud is free,
And calm as dream of slumbering infancy.

What mournful voices swell upon the air—
What weeping train draws nigh, oppressed with care ?—

These are the captive children of the race
Chosen of Heaven, who erst in that high place
Where great Jehovah's glorious temple soared,
Were privileged to hear the sacred word
Which promised life to all who should obey
His dread command, forsaking gods of clay.
Ah ! those were palmy days, ere sinful man
The sum of Heaven's long-suffering grace out ran,
Reckless, offending ever, till the day
Of vengeance, oft delayed, arrived, when they
Broken, but still impenitent, were led
Captive to Babylon,—their glory fled—
Their once proud place among the nations lost—
The memory of the past their only boast ;—
And doomed by tardy justice to atone,
'Mid toil, their sires' transgressions and their own.
But now, subdued and taught, they dwell apart,
Remembering mercies past with grateful heart,
An altered people, mindful of God's word,
And the glad tidings lips inspired had poured !

Hark ! like the solemn music of a dream,
Soft mingling with Euphrates' murmuring stream,
A chorus, many-voiced, united swells
In rapturous strain, and harmony that tells

Of hope and love, and aspiration high,
And holy faith ; until with feeble sigh
It sinks to silence, and no sound is heard,
Save of the tide, and leaves by night wind stirred.

Again the hymns of Zion fill the air,
As Hope revives the children of despair,
At times desponding 'neath their load of care,
Nor alway firm in trust on things above,
And fit dependence on the heavenly love.
These are the songs the exiled tribes would raise
By Babel's waters, to lost Zion's praise,
So sweet, mysterious, sad, that ears profane
Of cruel men, would, spell-bound, list the strain.
And the ecstatic words are heard—" If I
Forget thee, O Jerusalem ! may my
Right hand forget her cunning "—words of cheer
That speak of many a treasured memory dear,
Fanning the lofty hope to see again
The holy hill, and Mamre's storied plain.

Thus oft when toil of burning day was o'er
And merciless tyrants, wearied, asked no more,
Would mourning Israel chaunt the solemn strain
Had power to soothe the dreary captive's pain,

And bid the heavy-laden spirit lift
Its wandering thoughts to Heaven,—O precious gift!
The harps of Judah, silent long, were taught
To sound the thrilling chords with echoes fraught
Of days ere mortal sin provoked the doom,
Consigned the vanquished race through years of gloom
To sojourn, strangers, in the sultry clime
Where Babel's daring structure towered sublime:
Their song is still of Zion, though long years
Have vanished, since dejected and in tears—
Their city razed, their country's glory fled—
Their valiant leaders numbered with the dead—
The scattered tribes had left their happy seat,
Jerusalem, abode for Prophets meet!

Though distant times had seen their sires depart,
Still Zion's music lingers in the heart:
Her old traditions haunt the exile's breast,
Stilling each sad and harrowing thought to rest.
The yearning to salute the holy place,
Whose memory toil nor hardship could efface,
Attests reviving faith in promised grace:
Nor miracles are wanting to remind,
That One watch'd o'er them, ever constant, kind!
The fiery furnace had no power to slay
The men of God who dared to disobey,

Fearless of death, the impious King's command
To adore the idol made by human hand.
Taught by adversity, the people heard
With humble, contrite heart, the sacred word :
Until, at length, the voice went forth from Heaven—
To Cyrus, His Anointed, God's decree was given,
His holy temple to re-build, and free
A race repentant, from captivity.

Thus 'mid the darkness of departed time,
Shines ever bright a ray of light sublime—
High o'er the dust of empires long decayed,
Vain-glorious work of man, in ruins laid—
Benignant smiles the star of Faith to bless
Our faltering steps amid life's wilderness,
And lead us to the promised land which lies
Beyond the grave, unseen of mortal eyes.

Who knows the spot where dwelt the proud and feared,
Where Pharaoh's race their gorgeous palace reared,
The Princes of the Nile, who passed away,
Scarce thought upon beyond their fleeting day ?
The pyramid that o'er the sandy plain
Of Egypt towers, in lonely grandeur vain,
Soaring a giant pile amid the clouds,
Yet tells no tale of those whose dust it shrouds,

Who sleep obscurely in their marble bed,
Alike forgotten with the humble dead !

But they, the Champions of a cause divine,
The glorious Chiefs of Israel's favoured line,
Yet live in deathless story aye to shine !
Who from their bondage on the Nile released
By God's high intervention, towards the East
With joyful heart, pursued their dauntless way,
Where led the mystic cloud, their guide by day,
Which, to a fiery column changed each night,
Illumed the wilderness with guardian light.
And Jordan's stream back to its source was driven,
While passed the Ark, the Covenant of Heaven :
Oh, miracle divine ! the Almighty hand
Still beckoned Israel to the promised land,
'Mid portents wondrous, strange, which all declare
His power, and love, and ever gracious care !

Such revelations of the heavenly love,
Too often lightly prized, were given to move
Man's deep corrupted heart to things above—
To tell that God, still mindful, watched the way
Of Abraham's stubborn race, inclined to stray
From the right path, rebellious and profane,
Forsaking Him for earthly idols vain.

Yet He, long-suffering, slow to anger, willed
Salvation's lofty scheme should be fulfilled :
Benignant, just, He ever bore in mind
His ancient promise to redeem mankind ;
And merciful, advanced His purpose high
To fit the sinner for Eternity.
The Almighty, from His everlasting place,
Regarded man's long-alienated race,
Estranged alas ! by oft repeated sins—
Hardness of heart, whence deadlier crime begins—
Coldness, contempt of His supreme command,
And idol-worship spread throughout the land.

But truth, like river thwarted in its course,
Victorious soon, rolls on with mightier force,
Gathering new strength from obstacles which now
Impeded vainly its resistless flow.
Words from prophetic lips of holy cheer,
Tidings of hope, to fallen nature dear,
Within the hearts of righteous men were kept,—
The faithful few who o'er their country wept,
And watched the appointed time from age to age,
Predicted in the Prophet's Heaven-told page—
The time when after many a year of gloom,
Of sad reverse and fear, the Lord should come

“ Suddenly to His temple ”—even He,
The Saviour, the Prince of Immortality !

The song hath died away—the rushing stream
Alone is heard to break the listener’s dream.
The harp is silent, but the echoes live,
And words inspired of Hope and Faith survive :
Words which the impious city’s doom foretold
Have come to pass. Her mighty men of old
Are all forgotten—fallen is Babylon,
Her once imperial place but dimly known ;
But Zion’s songs divine still live to bless
The weary heart, ’mid peril and distress,
To cheer the Pilgrim fainting by the way,
Yet onward led by Faith’s celestial ray :
Like Israel’s captive sons, who ’mid the pain
Of exile loved to raise the pious strain,
And hail the light that clears the darksome path
That leads us through the cloudy gates of death,
Tried and regenerate, to the promised land—
The new Jerusalem—a happy band !—
Released for aye from toil, and change, and care,
Made fit, refined by Heaven, a glorious rest to share !

LINES FOR MUSIC.

Tears of the night ! ye weep the day,
In crystal dew-drops bright ;
Whilst Philomel with plaintive lay
Speeds darkness' lingering flight :
And listing that ethereal strain,
The sorrowing night grows fair,
And dries her dewy tears again,
As moonlight fills the air.

But when of every hope bereft,
Remembrance mars my rest,
No glimmering trace of thee is left
To cheer my darkened breast—
And I am doomed to weep in vain,
Unpitied and alone—
No more to hear Hope's soothing strain,
Since thou, my light, art gone !

Sonnet.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

We dwell on hopes we ne'er may realize ;
Or if the object prized be sometime won,
Alike o'er victory or defeat we moan :
For as some distant point that glistening lies,
Bathed in the sun's last rays, whose brightness flies
When we approach more near, and looking on,
Behold the lessening day-beams well-nigh gone,
And light slow fading from the vaporous skies—
So things most wished their fancied value lose
When ours ; and all too soon we learn to mourn
That we have wasted hours that ne'er return
In vain pursuit—Ah, let us rather choose
To dwell on hopes that look beyond the sky,
Whose consummation is without alloy !

Sonnet.

SLEEP.

Oh sleep, how strange is thy mysterious power !
The semblance thou of Death, yet fountain deep
Of life and strength to all ! Death is but sleep
Unbroken by the ever-circling hour—
At midnight sleeps the dewy-laden flower,
Yet opes its buds at morning's early peep
To pour fresh perfume on the airs that sweep
With gathered fragrance round its leafy bower :
And the dull torpor of the silent tomb
That bides till Time itself shall be no more,—
In which 't is ours to lie in dreamless gloom,
Unconscious, till the final day of doom,—
At length shall be dissolved, that we may soar
With life renewed, our mortal slumber o'er.

MOAN ON, WILD-SOUNDING SEA.

Moan on, wild-sounding Sea !

Thy dirge is for the brave,
The noble hearts that find in thee
One undistinguished grave—
Moan thy sad requiem, stormy deep,
For those whose relics thou dost keep !

O wild, unslumbering main,
A mighty tomb art thou
Of valiant hearts that throbbed in vain—
Of gallant heads laid low—
Of buried hopes, a shadowy host,
And friends, the loved and true, long lost !

Is it the mother's sigh
For *him* she held so dear,
On the dark billows murmuring by,
That swells upon the ear—
The orphan's wail—the widow's cry—
That sound so deep and mournfully !

Why moan, insatiate Sea,
Thy requiem o'er the dead,
Who slumbering lie, engulfed by thee,
In thy unfathomed bed ?
For them thy wild lament is vain ;
They do but sleep to wake again !

BEETHOVEN'S LAMENT.

" Les choses les plus souhaitées ou n'arrivent point, ou s'ils arrivent ce n'est ni dans les temps ni dans les circonstances où ils auraient fait un extrême plaisir."—*LA BRUYÈRE.*

I've lived through many a weary year,—
In silence, dropped the bitter tear !
For me the world was dark and drear :
The days of youth, to others bright,
For me, alas ! were only cheerless night.

I lingered on—till, one by one,
The friends I fondly counted on,
Some true, but world-oppressed like me,
And trustless therefore, all were gone,
And I was lonely in my misery.

I lingered on, depressed with woe,
Till fifty years had touched with snow
The scanty locks that fringe my brow ;
And then a pallid summer came,
When life waned fast, and joy was but a name.

I'd known that sickness of the heart
That comes when clinging hopes depart :—
The hollow friend—the scornful jest—
The vigil sad—the bitter smart
Of kindness unrepaid that chills the breast !

'T is true I soared where sound divine
Attunes the spheres—Too soon I fell !
Bruised by the fall, I lay supine,
Enthralled for aye by music's spell,
A martyr to the art I loved so well !

Then glory smiled—the hostile died—
But none to love!—the spring was dried
Which once in gentle music flowed,
And flowers along my pathway strewed—
I was alone—and joy a farewell sighed!

And fame was mine—for overwrought
By envious Fate, fresh life I sought
Amid the Muses' bower—the wreath
Was won that mocks my brow—and Death
Ere long will reap the flower I trained with toil of thought!

What matter wealth and fame to him
Whose pulse is slow, whose eyes are dim—
Who sees too near the Phantom grim,
Brandishing high his lightning dart,
To pierce with deadly stroke his trembling victim's heart!

NAPLES—1855.

Naples ! when I beheld thee first,
And life was fresh and bright,
How strange thy fairy landscape burst
Upon my ravished sight !
Though lovely thou as when of old
I sailed thy sparkling bay,
My eyes are dim, my heart is cold,
And youth has passed away.

And they who long, so long ago,
Thy magic influence knew,
Fast linked with me, in friendship's glow,
The kind, the loved, the true—
They are not here—their voice is still,
Their laugh is heard no more—
Yet now its echoes seem to fill
Again the classic shore !

At midnight oft, methinks, I see
Dim forms I loved so well,
And long-lost friends revisit me
Called back by slumber's spell :

But soon the flattering dream is o'er,
Those airy shapes are flown—
They mock my longing eyes no more,
And I am sad and lone !

Yet still the vine-clad mountains rise,
Reflected in the deep ;
And Capri's isle at distance lies,
And Ischia's rugged steep—
The gleaming wavelets joyful greet
The moon that rises bright,
And fairy music, faint and sweet,
Comes trembling through the night.

O Italy ! a spell is thine,
To move yet calm the breast ;
Thy clime, thy melody divine,
Can soothe the grief-oppressed—
Thou smilest still, unchanged, serene,
As in thy palmy day ;
Still reignest Nature's fairest Queen,
Though power hath passed away !

Sonnet.

SPRING.

Hark ! how the new-born leaves glad murmurs pour
To greet the advancing Spring, a Dryad fair
With rosy lip and amber-dropping hair—
Rude, boisterous winds disturb the air no more,
Nor piercing hail, nor wintry vapours froze :
Behold ! she walks the groves but now all bare
Of verdure, breathing zephyrs on the air
And scattering blooms and flowerets as of yore—
In her bright presence woods and streams rejoice,
And brooklets babble on with merry voice,
Making harmonious concert with the birds,
And rustling leaves, and softly-lowling herds—
All Nature seems in various choir to join,
Pouring one rapturous strain of praise divine !

Sonnet.

AUTUMN.

September, mantled in a robe of brown,
Embroidered o'er with streaks of sunny gold,
Leads on the yellow autumn, free and bold,
Rejoicing like a victor in his crown
Of corn and vine-leaves interlaced—adown
His path amid the fruitful vales, behold!
Red berries drop, and starlike flowers unfold
Their honied blooms to twine for him a zone—
'Tis meet we hail him with a joyous strain,
The harbinger of plenty, at whose nod,
O'er ripening corn-fields waves the yellow grain,
Chief blessing of the bounteous gifts of God:
While purple vineyards yield their tribute fair,
And clustering fruits perfume the grateful air.

Sonnet.

ON THE PRECEDING.

Thus while the ever-changing seasons trace
Their moving cycle through the various year,
Each in its fixed course proclaimeth clear
The hand that guides them in the mystic race.
Oh! may no light or wildering thought erase
From our deep hearts the truth that all are dear
To Him who made the whole. Then sorrow's tear,
And dark adversity shall not efface
The lofty thought that all were but in vain,
Were we designed, our brief existence done,
To droop, and perish like the flowerets gone,
And ne'er, like them, uprising to light again—
For then were we indeed of lower birth
Than creatures made for us, and but of earth.

LINES.

The evening gale sighs gently by,
Whispering sad and mournfully,
And lightly fans thy verdant meads,
Sweet Isis ! while among the reeds,
The silvery tenants of the stream
Leap up to hail day's parting beam.

Along thy shady banks I ply
My oar, fair river ! pensively,—
The bounding skiff flies swift and light,
Like youth's glad time when all seemed bright :
When life appeared a brilliant dream,
A prosperous course o'er summer stream !

When last I steered my fairy bark,
Under the bending foliage dark
O'erhangs smooth Cherwell's lucid tide,
The frolic laugh resounding wide
Through these green meadows, told mine ear
The friends so loved of youth were near !

Of that light-hearted, joyous crew,
Who with me youth's enchantment knew,
The dearest and the best are gone,—
The rest, perchance like me, have known
How rarely life's advanced career,
Like thee, fair stream, flows calm and clear !

Since then the brilliant hopes that hung
Like dew drops o'er my path, and flung
Forgotten freshness o'er the heart,
Have I beheld for aye depart ;
And with them all the lightsome tone
Of those dear days for ever flown !

Hark ! from yon venerable tower,
The pealing bell chimes forth the hour
Of nine, and tells its warning tale
To those who love the twilight pale,
Or linger in the groves, that now
They homeward bend their footsteps slow.

That well-known sound, re-echoing clear,
Familiar strikes upon the ear !
Thoughts, long forgotten, of the time
My days were in their happy prime,
Come back at its mysterious spell,
With scenes of old, once loved so well !

Have eighteen summers passed away,
Since linked with young companions gay,
The warm friends of my vernal time,
I heard that once familiar chime,
Loud booming through the soft twilight,
As evening faded into night?

'T is true ! and yet it seems to me
But yesterday, since sorrow-free,
And buoyed on Hope's enchanted wings,
I walked these flowery meadows last ;
Till sullen retrospection brings
A gloomy train of sorrows past !

The loss of those I held so dear,
Who once with me roamed careless here ;
Dreams fondly cherished, but in vain,
And wept through weary years of pain ;
With faded friendships past away—
All crowded seem into a day !

THE MAIDEN FROM AFAR.

FROM SCHILLER.

Among poor shepherds in a vale
Each year, when larks attuned the air,
And spring came wafted on the gale,
Appeared a maiden wondrous fair.

No native of that valley lone
Was she, and whither come, none knew ;
For instant every trace was gone
Soon as her form was lost to view.

With blessing was her presence fraught,
She moved to love each rustic heart—
Yet a reserve, sweet, lofty, taught
The crowd her spirit dwelt apart. }

From some Hesperian realm unknown,
She brought fair store of fruits and flowers,
The children of a brighter zone,
A distant clime more blest than ours.

To all with bounteous hand she gave
Her sunny fruits and flowerets gay :
Youth, age slow tottering to the grave—
Each with a gift went on his way.

Fresh comers, welcome, round her pressed—
But when a loving pair drew nigh,
To them was ever given the best
Of her bright store, abundantly.

LONGING.

FROM SCHILLER.

Ah ! if from these dark depths 't were mine
To climb these valleys shadowed o'er
By cold mists, I no more should pine,
But rest in peace for evermore !
I see fair hills that soar to Heaven,
In never-fading verdure dight—
Ah ! that to me were pinions given,
That upwards I might wing my flight !

I hear majestic harmonies,
 Seraphic strains of holy cheer—
Borne on the light and fragrant breeze,
 Celestial airs are wafted near :
I see amid the leafy gloom
 The golden fruits of Paradise,
And rainbow-flowers that ever bloom,
 Safe from the storm, or winter's ice.

How blest would roll away the time,
 There in the eternal sunshine's ray,
Amid those verdurous heights sublime,
 How fresh the balmy gales must play !
But the dark waters of the flood,
 That chafe between with foaming crest,
Against me lift their billows rude,
 And chill with lingering awe my breast !

One pinnacle stems the boiling surge,
 But ah ! no Pilot is at hand !—
Fearless, on board ! unwavering urge
 Thy course—the sails with life expand !
Thou must believe, and venture well,
 All empty pledge of faith is vain—
For only by a miracle,
 'T is thine the wondrous land to gain !

THE PILGRIM.

FROM SCHILLER.

Ere my spring was past away,
Young and blithe I wandered forth—
Youth's gay dance I left for aye,
When I left my father's hearth.

Worldly store I cast behind—
Wealth to me were useless chaff—
So I went with childlike mind,
Leaning on my Pilgrim-staff!

For a mighty hope was mine—
Faith's mysterious language spake—
“Forward—lo! the path is thine,
Towards the dawn thy journey take!”

“Till at length a golden gate
Gleams before thee—enter there,
And thy former earthly state,
Changed, shall soar immortal, fair!”

Evening fell, and smiled the morn—

Ne'er a moment rested I—

Yet alas! the mystic bourn,

Greeted not my longing eye.

Mountains barred the promised land,

Mighty waters hemmed my path—

At my bidding arches spanned

Yawning depths—the torrent's wrath!

Onward ever!—till I stood

Where a river eastward ran:

Trusting to the eddying flood,

There my downward course began.

On its playful waves, the river

Bore me to a mighty sea,

Dim and vast and gloomy ever—

Yet the goal I may not see!

O'er the gulf no bridge can bear me—

Ah! yon vault, so radiant, clear,

Never will approach more near me—

And the *there* is never *here*!

THE SHADES OF NIGHT.

The shades of night fall thick and fast,
Perchance, dear friends, it is the last,
The last that we on earth may meet,
For life is short, and time is fleet!

Alas! how soon the parting day,
Long dreaded, comes to chase away
The golden dreams of youth and home,
Ere we are doomed afar to roam!

Oh bitter parting! tear-drops start,
That bring no solace to the heart,
But leave it sad, and sore-depressed—
With many a boding care oppressed.

I go, dear friends, at brightening morn—
My heart with nameless anguish torn—
I go, perchance to see no more
The friends, so prized, of days of yore!

Yet 'mid life's wanderings 't will be dear
Still to recal the parting tear—
The fond adieu of those we loved,
And kindly tones, and friendships proved !

LINES

IN MEMORIAM.

The sky is changed—a sudden gloom
Hath chased gay dreams away—
One lies a tenant of the tomb,
I thought to see to-day !

A friendly voice is dumb—'t is mine
Those tones no more to hear,
Whose music sounded half divine
When those she loved were near !

And greetings fond were ever poured
On this once welcome day—
Alas ! no more a voice adored
Shall bid Time's footstep stay.

Ah me ! a lasting shade hath dropped
O'er life's fast-ebbing stream—
The *gifted* friend is gone, I hoped
Would cheer my latest dream !

Too soon, too soon, the loved must go—
The true, the early tried—
Life wanes amid Time's ceaseless flow,
The cold remain behind.

Oh bitter memory ! fond regret !
'T is best we bear our doom—
In vain the eye with tears is wet,
We may not cheat the tomb !

JAN. 11, 1864.

LINES

On seeing again a series of well-known pictures which had lain for many
years packed in cases.

Eyes long closed in stony sleep,—
Eyes that once did vigil keep
With love unwearied o'er my bed,
When sickness bowed my drooping head,
Have often looked with tranquil gaze
On you, mute friends of other days!

Ye are not changed, though years have flown,
Familiar friends, in childhood known!
Kind lady, with the small, white hand,
You still smile on me, gentle, bland,
As when you smiled in days gone by,
While yet the loved and lost were nigh!

Still 'mid yon landscape's sunny glow,
Where trees bloom on in verdant row,
The Huntsman keen pursues the chase,
Following in the wild deer's trace:
And the light brook meandering near,
Flows 'mid the weeds in current clear.

Oft hath my eye in wonder dwelt
On the far line that seems to melt
Into the air, where dim and faint
Green hill and wood in one are blent,
And I would deem some region fair
Lay stretched beyond that line of air—

Some far, unknown, mysterious land,
Called up by Fancy's fairy wand,
Such as in dreams we seem to tread
By some strange spell, resistless led—
And thought that distant land a type
Of coming days of manhood ripe!

And now the power is mine no more
To bid the wandering fancy soar,
Or image fairy regions bright,
Beyond yon limit streaked with light,
Nor with prophetic vision see
Aught beyond dull reality.

But ye, old friends, with mute appeal,
Bid slumbering memory backward steal
A few brief moments to the days
That shone so fair in hope's pure rays—
And seeing you, almost I fain
Would dream that I were young again!

Sonnet.

INCONSTANCY.

O thou, who ne'er till now did'st change to me,
Whose voice, so gentle, kind, had ever shed
A balm o'er troubled thoughts when hope seemed fled !
Wilt thou, when mournful, lost, I turn to thee,
When life's dark current runneth cheerlessly,
And wintry frosts, slow-gathering o'er my head,
Tell that dull age creeps on with noiseless tread—
Cruel, desert me on the world's wide sea ?
Ah ! ever thus it is with mortal love,
A thing, alas ! too perilous to prove :
For we on earth may never, never find
A home, a resting-place, or hope to bind
One heart by golden chains which nought can move,
Since love is fleeting as the summer wind !

AT A HEALING SPRING.

Fair city of the breezy hills
How pure thy healing waters gush !
Fresh springing bright, in crystal rills,
On to the verdant knoll they rush ;
Still speeding on with gathering force,
They sing and sparkle in their course :
Their gladsome music fills the sky,
With sweet and grateful melody,
The music of thy fuming rills,
O city of the wild and breezy hills !

In the far times of Greece or Rome,
When men such deities adored,
Some god had made thy bed his home,
And from his urn thy stream had poured :
Then, O benign and lovely spring,
Many a votive offering,
Many a blooming wreath of flowers,
Dropping wine in amber showers,
Had been suspended at thy shrine,
In adoration of thy power divine !

But be our duteous praises given
To Him who bade thy waters flow,
Who, from His seat sublime in Heaven,
With love regardeth all below :
Whose ceaseless bounty hath supplied,
To soothe our pains, thy healing tide—
Who, mindful ever of us, gave
To dip in thy restoring wave,
And who hath given to *us* to know,
(Blest privilege) from whom these bounties flow !

Where yon arched temple rears its head,
The plenteous element springs forth
From its subterranean bed
In the deep bosom of the earth :
Clear-welling up from hidden caves,
Ere through its craggy path it raves,
The liquid crystal softly glides
Beneath yon roof in glassy tides,
Until its smooth, melodious course,
Is changed to maddening speed and murmurs hoarse.

The virgin waters leap to light,
With melody and healing fraught,
And greet the day as pure and bright,
As childhood's unconcernèd thought ;
Ere yet the rude world's jarring din
Strikes a harsh chord the breast within,

And we are doomed to struggle on
'Till welcome peace at last be won,
When we shall reach the cloudy sea
Of dim, mysterious Eternity !

How like is thine, O rapid stream,
To the brief current of our life !
At first all smooth, like childhood's dream,
Like manhood then, all noise and strife—
We chafe through life's pertubèd way,
And fret and fume our little day—
Our strength then spent, our swiftness o'er,
'We gain at last the even shore,
And slowly glide into the sea—
The boundless ocean of Eternity !

But would that we in our swift course,
O, lovely stream ! resembled thee,
Whose waters, even from their source,
Bring healing and fertility !
That when our race be almost run,
Our weary pilgrimage nigh done,
We may well pause with joy at last
On periods of our journey past,
When like thee, O benignant flood,
We made ourselves the source of others' good !

COUNT BRÖMSER OF RÜDESHEIM.

A LEGEND OF THE RHINE.

Aye foremost in the sacred fight
Was Brömser, Lord of Rudesheim—
He was a true and valiant Knight,
That ancient Count of Rudesheim !

A dragon fierce despoiled the land—
To slay the pest a league was sworn :
But Brömser, with unaided hand,
Bade the scared Christians cease to mourn.

The treacherous Pagans ambush laid—
As swift the avenging death-stroke fell,
The stalwart Knight was prisoner made
By the false and bloody Infidel !

A captive long, a vow he swore
That his only child should take the veil,
Were it vouchsafed to him once more,
Free, from the Holy Land to sail.

His brave companions sought in vain
Through many a sad revolving year,
To break the Prisoner's galling chain,
And open wide his dungeon drear.

At length, released, he bent his way,
A Pilgrim, to his native land,
To where his fortified dwelling lay,
On the far-distant Rhenish strand.

His beauteous child, Gisela, came,
With smiles, her long-lost Sire to greet—
'T was his to tell, with tears of shame,
The vow that bade her quick pulse beat!

For she was Otho's destined bride—
Her sunny cheek turned deadly pale—
Tears and entreaties long she tried,
Her heart-drops were of no avail!

She knelt before her cruel Sire,
Her tears, she knew, were poured in vain;
She felt her dearest hope expire,
Her breast was wrung with bitter pain!

Dark frowning on a beetling rock
The old, ancestral castle stood,
And long had braved the boisterous shock
Of tempest rude, and thundering flood.

Gisela, quick as thought, unbarred,
Ere Brömser knew, a casement high :
Beneath, the swollen Rhine ran hard,—
She plunged with wild, despairing cry !

Then Brömser groaned in anguish sore
With unavailing, late remorse :
He bent him o'er the torrent's roar,
And bade them find Gisela's corse !

Her shrieks were heard at midnight's hour—
At morning's dawn they found the maid ;
A guard who watched by Hatto's tower,
Told where the mangled form was laid.

Brömser then swore a church to build,
To give Gisela's soul repose :
Time passed—but he had not fulfilled
Vows made to quiet guilty throes !

In a dark dream the dragon came
He'd slain long since in Palestine :
While terror shook his trembling frame—
His child appeared with smile divine !

Then swift the baleful monster flew,
Scared by that look, so holy, dear !
Brömser awoke all pale, and knew
What caused that dream of guilty fear !

Forthwith he reared a gorgeous fane,
Where his daughter's sacred dust was laid :
And pious Priests, in solemn train,
At her sculptured shrine devoutly prayed.

He followed soon, the weeping Sire,
For grief fast holds the agèd breast :
It was his last-expressed desire,
To share Gisela's holy rest !

BARCAROLLE.

Row, Gondolier ! the night is fair,
No breeze disturbs the dreamy air ;
Row swift where balmy zephyrs creep,
And scatter freshness o'er the deep :
For I am weary, sore-opprest,
And fain would be awhile at rest !

Row swiftly from the busy shore,
Whose glittering throng delights no more—
Where none are left whose cordial smile
Could once each dreary thought beguile—
I fain would leave the heartless crowd,
Its hollow laugh and accents loud.

Blue Heaven and stars reflected shine
Upon the deep with light divine,
Picturing a world unlike to this,
A calm abode of peaceful bliss—
O guide me to that stormless sea,
Fit emblem of Eternity,
Where I may rest me, blest and free !

THE VOICE OF MUSIC.

Music's voices never die,
They wander through the pathless sky :
And sounds well known in childhood's day,
Oft fitful near the dying play !

'T is strange to hear forgotten notes—
Sad airs, whose dreamy music floats
In plaintive murmurs round the bed
Whence hope and friends for aye are fled !

Oh ! music heard in infancy—
The mother's loving, anxious sigh—
Will come to haunt the listening ear
When life's dark, gloomy goal is near.

And joyous lays of far-gone days
Still haunt us, weary and opprest,
And heard amid the world's harsh din
Pour comfort o'er the laden breast.

When hope is fled, weird Music's voice
Can bid the spirit, bowed, rejoice—
And if the fairy charm be brief,
Still to the heart it brings relief.

Her magic spell hath twofold power
To call up scenes of childhood's hour ;
Or gather round the dreams of gloom,
That beckon to the silent tomb !

Though Music's birthland lies afar,
She loves to wing her flight through air—
And many a long-lost melody
Floats past us on the wind's low sigh !

LINES FOR MUSIC.

Why should I weep when others smile,
Or mourn when all around seem glad !
Though when they laugh, perchance the while,
Their thoughts, like mine, are dark and sad.

And they who seem so light and gay,
But wear the mask of happiness—
A frail disguise, which, torn away,
Betrays the lonely heart's distress !

Mine is the lot of all who feel,
Or ponder deep on what may come,
Who dread what Time may yet reveal,
Ere we shall slumber in the tomb.

How many a parting, sore to bear,
From things on which the heart was fixed—
What gloomy lot 't is ours to share,
What sorrows in life's cup are mixed !

THE PARROT OF THE ORINOCO.

IMITATED FROM THE GERMAN.

Where Orinoco's sands lie spread,
A hoary Parrot broods alone,
So rigid, frozen, you had said
His was a form of sculptured stone !

Through deep and rocky chasms fall
The waters of the boiling stream :
And sunny palms, and poplars tall
Over the mighty cataract gleam.

The restless torrent dashed on high,
From its worn channel soars in vain ;
The Iris-arch is bent through sky,
Based in the spray that drops in rain.

Hard by the river's desert strand,
To wake no more, a people sleeps,
Who erst, expelled their native land,
Sought refuge 'mid the craggy steeps.

And they, the lost Atures, died,
E'en as they lived, a dauntless race :
The reeds that fringe the river's side,
Wave o'er their last dark resting place.

Of all the tribe, survivor lone,
The old grey Parrot mourneth there :
He whets his beak against a stone ;
His wild voice echoes through the air.

Ah ! where are now the youths who taught him
Notes of their language, half exprest—
And where the maids whose fair hands brought him
Seeds, and strewed his downy nest ?

Mouldering beneath the sod, they lie,
Conquered by fierce destroyer's hand :
Far on the breeze his wailings die,
He may not wake the slumbering band.

None comprehend that dreary cry,
To a strange world poured sad and low,
The rapids, ceaseless, thunder by,
No other voice salutes him now !

When the wild Indian, rowing past
The stony ridge, beholds him there,
His light canoe he paddles fast,
And hurries by in shuddering fear!

LINES.

IN MEMORIAM.

Thy spirit was too pure for earthly strife,
And God hath early called thee from this life
To dwell with Him. Yet do we vainly mourn,
And bid thee from thy heavenly home return,
To share the burthen all below must bear,
The toil of broken hopes, the endless care.—
'T were selfish to repine, since thou art blest,
And 'mid the angelic band at holy rest!
Ah! would were we prepared to wing our flight,
Like thee, to regions of celestial light—
To soar on high, and meet to part no more,
Our many sorrows past, our worldly trials o'er!

SEPT. 23, 1863.

Sonnet.

IN MEMORIAM.

The Zephyr comes, and brings the golden time
Of Spring and sunny flowers, her children fair !
Fresh odours float upon the balmy air
From honeysuckle wreaths that gleaming climb
The leafy elm, and palm that towers sublime,
Forming a maze of tremulous shadow, where
At glowing noon full many a youthful pair,
Or silent dream, or chaunt the joyous rhyme ;
To me the festal season only brings
A train of memories vain and mournful dreams :
The heart grows cold as retrospection flings
A gloom around that clouds day's genial beams :
For one did walk these vernal groves with me
Who sleeps afar—whom I no more may see !

Sonnet.

IN MEMORIAM.

Thy placid air, thy wan and wasted cheek
Too long had told that thou wert doomed to soar,
Released, to that far region where no more
The strong and cruel trample on the weak—
'Tis sad to call to mind those accents meek,
The dear, appealing smile that ever wore
A look of days gone by, and trials o'er—
As strength declined, the more they seemed to speak
Of thoughts, high-lifted from the world, and dreams
Of hope and love that pointed still to Heaven—
And many a year had flown since sunny gleams
Of earthly joy to thy lone breast were given—
For they had left thee first who loved thee best :
But now thou art with them, secure and blest !

LINES FOR MUSIC.

In a garden deserted an old rose tree grew,
All entwined with wild weeds, almost hidden from view :
Yet a few straggling flowers still hung on the bough
Once laden with roses, white-tufted like snow.

And the pale, lingering blooms still a faint odour shed
Through the alleys whose once gay frequenters are fled :
For the hands that long tended the garden are gone—
And bright eyes are faded that through the leaves shone !

The heart, like the rose tree, neglected and old,
Would still pour its sweetness,—but others are cold :—
Perchance none are left its lost fragrance to prize,
Till, forgotten, unfriended, it withers and dies !

THE RAINBOW.

Rainbow, melting fast away,
Ah, linger yet awhile—
Still light the dim and fading day
With brief, celestial smile !

Rainbow, soaring through the sky,
 Arched with wandering beams,
Too soon thy brilliant colours die,
 Like hope's enchanting dreams !

The Iris-wreath that shows so bright,
 Springing sublime in air,
Seen for a moment, cheats the sight,
 And flies to realms more fair.

Almost as swift, the fairy light
 Of other days is flown,—
Youth's early dreams, so gay and bright,
 Like the Rainbow, soon are gone !

The brightest things the soonest fly,
 The spirit learns to mourn
O'er happy scenes, and days gone by,
 And hopes that ne'er return !

THE
CHARCOAL-BURNER OF THE BREISGAU.

A LEGEND OF THE BLACK FOREST.

Part First.

A solemn tournament was held
Where Breisgau's mountains rise,
And many a gallant Knight from far,
Contended for the prize.

And store of peerless ladies thronged
To view the dazzling scene :
But loveliest of the courtly crowd,
Shone the fair Leoline !

Sole daughter of the powerful Prince,
Who ruled that wide domain,
She sate enthroned in regal state,
With all her virgin train.

The palace-windows high were filled
 With dames of proud degree ;
 The Queen of beauty judged the prize
 From gilded balcony.

the arduous
 And as ~~castles~~ tilt was run
 Bright scarfs were waved on high,
 While piercing notes of bugle clear
 Resounded through the sky.

And silken Courtiers gay, and Knights
 Of warlike mien, were there :
 Deep files of men at arms marched by
 In martial order fair.

In flowing robes the minstrel band
 Sate ranged in gallery high :
 With blended voice and harp they sang
 The praise of chivalry.

A youth of lofty air, but clad
 In Peasant's humble garb,
 Amid the gaping crowd admired
 Each Knight on glittering barb.

For the first time such gorgeous show
Had met young Berchtold's eye,
Vague dreams of grandeur filled his brain,
And pompous pageantry.

The tourney o'er, the wondering youth
Retired with footsteps slow—
A dark and sudden cloud had fallen
Over his thoughtful brow !

He sought amid the Schwartzwald drear
His father's lowly cot ;
Ambitious dreams inspired his breast,
He scorned his humble lot !

And as he plied his weary task,
His heart was far away :
He thought on courts and steel-clad Knights,
And chivalrous array !

In many a fevered vision came
The peerless Leoline !
She seemed to smile upon the youth,
But a gulf lay deep between !

A charcoal-burner's son was he—
In vain might he aspire
To wed a Princess of the Rhine,
Child of a Royal Sire!

A darker cloud obscured his brain,
His cheek grew pale and wan,
His eyes were dimmed, his heart was chilled—
His joyous tone was gone!

He lingered at his daily task—
His father grieved so sore—
“Ah me! my once-obedient son
Is duteous child no more!”

“Tell me,” cried he, “what dreams are thine?
Thy thoughts are far away!
Thy mother left us long ago—
Brief time is mine to stay!”

“And if *thou* leav'st me at my need,
Alone, and bowed with years,
For me few dreary hours remain—
A sad old age of tears!”

“ Dear father,” Berchtold cried, “ I best
 May smooth thy life’s decline,
If in the battle’s doubtful strife,
 To win renown be mine !”

“ And I perchance the spurs may wear,
 To knightly prowess due,
So I demean me as thy son,
 A soldier brave and true !”

Berchtold then said what pageant rare
 Had met his dazzled sight,
What gallant train of armed Knights,
 And Squires and ladies bright !

And that he fondly deemed he might,
 By arduous deed, aspire
To bear the shield of some good Knight,
 A bold, adventurous Squire !

Until at length, the ordeal past,
 Proved worthy in the fight,
Though humbly born, he yet might claim
 The guerdon of a Knight !

The old man smiled—"The post of Squire
For thee is far too high—
'Tis not for Peasant blood to mix
With high-born chivalry!"

"And none who rise too high may thrive—
The humble linnet pours
His neighbouring song, nor dares a flight
Where the fierce falcon soars!"

"'Tis vain to climb beyond the place
Assigned by Heaven thy sphere—
Save on the parent stem no bough
May fruit or blossoms bear!"

While Berchtold weighed the counsel sage
His timid Sire had given—
The Hermit of the wood approached,
A soul devote to Heaven!

He heard the youth's complaint—awhile
He read his ample brow—
Then traced the lines that crossed his palm
In study deep and slow.

Long time the saintly Hermit stood,
Buried in thought profound—
The youth, in anxious silence, prayed
With eyes that sought the ground.

“Alles mit Gott!”—the good man cried—
“And He can raise the low :
All in His sight are equal born,
Since all to Him must bow.”

“All is with God—my blessing take—
This lofty motto bear !”
Far in the glade he led, then cried,
“Now burn your charcoal here !”

And there, next morn, they plied their craft
Till the live long day was done :
When lo ! amid the ember-heap,
A silver ingot shone !

The metal pure, melodious rang
Upon the rocky ground—
Exulting hope filled Berchtold's breast,
He deemed the path were found

That leads to fortune's giddy height—
The path so hard to find,
Which he who dares must guide him well,
Nor pause to look behind.

Joyful they toiled amain—ere twelve
Laborious months were o'er,
Deep in a neighbouring cave lay hid
A pile of glittering ore!

Part Second.

The white-haired Hermit of the wood,
Begirt with hempen belt,
Approached, one morn, the hut remote
Where the Charcoal-burners dwelt.

With mild, benignant air, he signed
The Cross, then prayed awhile—
“Alles mit Gott—aye-trust in Him,”
He said with gentle smile.

“ Now list thee, Berchtold, to my words—

 The fateful hour draws near,

For thy liege-lord demands thy aid ;

 A sacred claim, and dear !”

“ Thy Fatherland is sore oppressed,

 And hostile strangers rule—

Thy ruined Prince hath refuge sought

 In the lofty Kaiserstuhl.”

“ Long time he quelled the foreign league,

 Till victory left him poor :

His once-abounding treasure spent,

 His troops would fight no more.”

“ High in the mountain lone, concealed,

 The princely exiles wait

The time when friends shall bring them aid,

 Ere yet it be too late !”

“ But none appear—all hope seems fled ;

 Ere many days are past,

Belike a fierce, marauding band,

 Our sovereign's haunt hath traced.”

“The leaders of the invading force
Have sworn good Conrad’s death :
Berchtold, now haste thee to his side—
Be firm, be strong in faith !”

“Alles mit Gott !—thy silver heap
Devote to purpose high,—
Rally around thy Prince his troops,
And strive for victory !”

Then Berchtold knew the time was come
His dreams had oft foretold—
His arm seemed nerved afresh—his breast
Swelled high with courage bold.

He humbly knelt in prayer, while tears
Of joy o’erflowed his eyes—
“Alles mit Gott !”—good Hermit bless
Our solemn enterprise !”

“With Heaven’s good help, this vigorous arm
Perchance may turn the day—
And thou must with my father bide
While I am far away.”

The holy man his blessing gave,
And Berchtold bade farewell
To his lowly dwelling in the wood,
In the Schwartzwald's deepest dell.

Swift as the wind he cleared the steep,
The Kaiserstuhl he gained—
He knelt before the fallen Prince,
And his loyal heart was pained !

He saw the Landgrave, once so strong,
With few adherents left,
Abandoned on the wind-swept height,
Of every hope bereft.

And he, with many a mournful sigh,
His country's loss bemoaned,
And, thinking on his only child,
In bitter anguish groaned !

Berchtold, while tears coursed down his cheek,
In accents, faltering poured,
Offered his heart's best blood to shield
From scath his sovereign lord.

He told where in a grotto deep
Bright silver bars lay piled ;
And how, by Heaven's high will, on him
Fortune propitious smiled.

“ Now hear me, Sire ! the boundless wealth
Bestowed by Heaven is thine !
To aid, with faithful hand and heart,
The righteous cause, be mine ! ”

“ Enrol me in thy guard ! Should I
Prove worthy in the fight,
Promise me, on thy princely word,
I rise a belted knight ! ”

The Prince, amazed, now felt his breast
With sudden hope expand—
He vowed, if victory smiled, the youth
Might claim his daughter's hand !

A noble knight should Berchtold rise,
Lord of a wide domain—
The lands that from the mountain stretched
O'er the wide Rhenish plain.

The Charcoal-burner knew each path
That through the forest led,
And where the recreant troops lay hid,
Their ancient feeling dead.

Allured by golden bribe, they rose,
Or touched by faint remorse—
Like snowball gathering fast, soon they
Swelled to a mighty force.

Fired with new zeal, the assembled troops
Marched towards the city-gate,
There, 'mid the wood, in ambush close,
The unwary foe to wait.

Soon the conflicting armies met
In murderous array ;
The archers plied their deadly craft,
Bold knights in death-swoon lay.

The storm of battle thundered loud,
Long raged the deadly strife—
Brave Berchtold fought unscathed, it seemed
He bore a charmed life.

Before his arm the opposing mass
 Shrunk in disorder wild—
 His pathway o'er the bloody plain
 With heaps of slain was piled.

At length he met the hostile chief,—
 He dared him to the fight—
 The strife soon o'er, he quailed before
 Berchtold's resistless might!

Their leader slain, the routed foe
 Fled from the battle-field—
 "Alles mit Gott!" the victor cried,
 "To Heaven we all must yield!"

None asked whence came the stranger bold
 Whose arm had turned the fight—
 They deemed his lineage noble as
 His peerless valour bright.

A belted knight, he claimed the hand
 Of beauteous Leoline;
 And the Charcoal-burner's son became
 High Lord of Zähringen!

LINES FOR MUSIC.

True spirits, gentle born, fast cling
Ere youth's confiding time is o'er,
And deep is felt the bitter sting
Of baffled love that galls so sore !

The slighted heart soon learns to mourn,
In silence, friendships past away—
And icy gulfs, and wastes forlorn
That chill with gloom life's darkened way.

Though nought be left to love ! for vain
It is one mutual heart to bind—
Youth's phantom-voices come again
To haunt us on the wandering wind !

LINES FOR MUSIC.

Music dies upon the ear,
 'Tis scarcely heard when gone—
And fitful, oft it hovers near,
 When we are sad and lone !

The notes our childish bosom stirred
 Float by at midnight's hour—
And long-forgotten strains are heard
 When darkness' spell has power.

They sigh upon the rising gale,
 Then sink away to rest—
Their home is in a distant sphere,
 A region calm and blest.

'Tis sweet to ponder on the Past,
 With all its visions fair ;
On friendships, though they did not last,
 And day-dreams, light as air !

Weird Music, wave thy silver wing,
 Call back the times of old,
And some bright gleams of memory fling
 O'er the heart grown faint and cold !

LINES FOR MUSIC.

While the snow-flakes are falling, and cold is the air,
Sing the gay song of summer, when zephyrs blew fair :
Oh, banish dark visions of winter and gloom—
O'er the heart's lonely waste bid the spring-flower bloom !

The snow-flakes fall fast, the heart waxes more cold—
More dim grow the long-cherished memories of old !
Stern Time hurries on, and his footsteps are seen
On the deep-furrowed brow, once so blithe and serene !

But more deep on the heart are the dark traces left,
When the once-joyous spirit, of hope seems bereft—
Oh, sing the gay song of the bright season past,
Though the snow-flakes of winter fall chilly and fast !

THE CONFERENCE OF THE DEAD.

The Princess in a death-swoon lay
In Biberich's lordly hall—
Sudden she knew her hour was come,—
Death's shadow fast did fall!

And then the dying lady spoke
In faltering accents low—
She pressed her hand upon her heart,
The pulse beat faint and slow.

“ My faithful friend, now haste to me,
Mary of Eppstein hear!
I have a sorrowful tale to tell,
Will chill thy breast with fear!”

“ Quick bring my friend ere 'tis too late,
This is my last dim day!—
In vain the dying lady prayed—
Eppstein lay far away.

Soon all was still—she ceased to breathe,
The spirit pure was fled :
In princely state the body lay,
Stretched on a funeral bed.

None slept that night—for all who dwelt
Within the palace walls,
Must solemn, dreary vigil hold
In the dark silent halls.

A guard of honour flanked the gate,
By the widely-flowing Rhine—
Standing unmoved, with arms reversed,
Dark ranged in triple line.

The warder looked upon the stream
That freshly wandered by—
Nor moon nor glimmering stars appeared
To light the summer sky.

The clock struck twelve—the distant roll
Of rapid wheels was heard,—
But something in the hollow sound
The breast with horror stirred !

A carriage, guided by no hand,
Came thundering down the hill,
Six coal-black horses, tearing on,
At the palace gate stood still.

It was a strange, grim vehicle,
'Mid the darkness half defined,
That halted near the balustrade
With troop of soldiers lined.

A lady clad in robes of white,
Claimed entrance at the gate—
At first, the Warder prompt refused—
“None entered there so late!”

Then the mysterious lady paused,—
She drew aside her veil;
The startled Warder knew full well
Those features, ghastly pale!

And Eppstein's Countess he beheld—
He made no more delay:—
She passed along with noiseless step
To where the Princess lay.

A train of maidens sable-garbed,
 Watched in the corridor—
One pryed into the haunt of death,
 The nearest to the door.—

What through the key-hole met her sight
 That bade her spirit quail?—
She saw her lady sitting up
 All motionless and pale!

The maidens each in turn surveyed
 The strange, appalling sight,
Where the dead Princess upright sate,
 Her features ashy white!

The Countess Eppstein, pale as she,
 Stood moveless at her side :
A hundred tapers poured their light
 Through the spectral chamber wide.

Their lips moved fast, no words were heard
 To break the silence drear—
The maiden-train with terror quaked,
 It was a sight of fear!

As the neighbouring clock with ghastly note
Pronounced the hour of one,
The lady Eppstein, silently,
From the chamber glided on.

The Seneschal stood in the hall
In courtly mourning drest ;
He led her down the marble stair,
A high and honoured guest.

By chance her hand he lightly touched,
He shrunk in nameless fear,—
He felt that it was icy-cold,
No throbbing life was there !

The coal-black horses madly tore
Up Mosbach's steepy hill :
Instant the thundering sound had ceased,
And all again was still.

Summoned next morn, from Königstein
The Prince of Nassau rode—
He paused few moments on his way,
At Eppstein's proud abode.

With grief, he learnt the Countess died,
Late the preceding night :
And how as midnight's hour was tolled,
Her spirit winged its flight.

Brief time he stayed, swift way he made,
To Biberich spurring on—
He saw the palace-windows closed—
He was a widower lone !

They told him what pale visitor
Had hovered near the bed—
The Prince then knew that night was held
A conference of the Dead !

THE LAND OF MYSTERY.

How oft we dream of some far land,
Some blissful isle of rest,
Where we might dwell, a happy band,
Secure, in holy rest !
Amid life's ceaseless ills, we fain would fly
To seek that land—the land of mystery !

Perchance our early home is fair,
And dear our native vale,
Where sweet birds warble through the air,
And fragrance loads the air :
Yet those whose presence blesses Nature's boon
May leave us, and for aye—ah, who can tell how soon !

Then silent is the tuneless grove,
And dim the clouded sky ;
The laughing streams we used to love
Pour mournful melody !
This, then, is not the land weird fancy drew
In brilliant tints, when life was fresh and new !

We dare the wild and stormy main
To seek that better land—
We vanquish perils drear, in vain,
To win the blissful strand—
The region bright we dreamt in childhood's day,
Ere sorrow came to dark our onward way!

We wander far through sunny lands,
And relics of old Time—
Where many a lofty thought expands
The breast, and dreams sublime—
Yet lonely is the ground once trodden by
The mighty gone, whose names will never die!

We seem to hear their spirits sigh
Upon the midnight air,
Where once they held communion high,
'Mid sculptured arches fair.
Do they still haunt those lone and mouldering homes,
Where marble columns tower, and ruined domes?

And we, like them, must journey far
To seek the wished-for shore;
Whose pathway lies in fields of air,
Where we, released, must soar:
For distant far beyond the azure sky,
Is the bright land we seek—the land of mystery!

THE RAVEN OF STOLTZENFELS.

A LEGEND OF THE RHINE.

Sir Ottmar, Lord of Stoltzenfels,
Where rolls the foaming Rhine,
Had left his father's halls to fight
For the noble Palatine.

And his gentle sister, Williswind,
Defenceless, and alone,
Oft prayed that Ottmar might return,
And the bloody fight were done.

Her saintly deeds, her charity,
Were far and wide renowned ;
In after times her dwelling-place
Was counted holy ground.

From old Cologne to Basle remote
Her fame resounded high :
The loveliest maiden of the land,
And emblem sweet of piety !

Sir Ottmar marched to Julich's walls,
To aid the Palatine ;
He left his sister, grieving sore,
In his castle on the Rhine.

She trained a Raven from the nest,
And gave him berries fair :
He loved to nestle in her breast,
Or fondly peck her hair.

Where'er she went, he hopped behind,
Or eager, flew before :
Sometimes, upon her finger perched,
The maid her favourite bore.

One evening, as the Damsel gazed
Where the rushing stream ran deep,
A stranger, clad in Pilgrim's garb,
Toiled up the rocky steep.

He begged a refuge for the night,
" For he was travel-worn,—
He needed rest, no food had passed
His lips since early morn !"

The Lady bade him to the meal
Where all at evening met—
For rich and poor, in those far times,
At the same board were set.

And as the Pilgrim strange approached,
With stealthy step, more near,
With ruffled plumes, the Raven croaked
In mingled rage and fear!

The Pilgrim, seated at the board,
A mighty flagon drained :
He laughed and quaffed amain, till soon
No fears his speech restrained.

Dark stories of the holy land
He told with savage glee :
Of foray rude, and bloody fight,
And deeds of cruelty.

The noble Lady soon retired,
Scared by the reckless tone :
Dejected, in her bower remote,
She sate, and mused alone.

His harsh voice sounded in her ear,
And gleamed his bold, dark eye—
Vague terror seized her harassed breast,
And yet she scarce knew why!

Next morn the stranger bade adieu
To gentle Williswind :
And all seemed glad when he was gone,
He left no friend behind.

“ Now, noble mistress,”—Eberhard cried—
The ancient Seneschal,—
“ No pilgrim from the holy land
Is he, that stranger tall !”

“ I watched him close, and oft-times when
He deemed that none were nigh,
He marked our fortress’ weakest points
With keen, observant eye !”

A month flew swift—one knocked upon
The iron-guarded gate
When all was silent life within,
And the hour was lone and late.

Staunch Eberhard first looked through the grate,
The day was well-nigh o'er—
He thought he knew those features hard—
His mind misgave him sore!

The stranger fain few words would speak
With Williswind, anon—
“Matters of import high he brought,
And he must quick be gone!”

He entered—loud the Raven screamed—
The Damsel, in amaze,
Beheld the Pilgrim's wiry brow,
And knew his bold, free gaze!

But now his russet-gown was changed
For guise of warlike knight—
In place of scallop-shell, he wore
A suit of armour bright.

The Pilgrim-Knight besought the hand
Of peerless Williswind—
Loudly and fierce he swore that he
Would prove a husband kind!

Aghast, in faltering tones, she urged,
Her Brother was away!—
'T were best to wait—he would return
At no far-distant day!

The suitor dark the table struck,
Loud rang his steely glove:
Williswind, shuddering, pale, recoiled—
He saw she loathed his love!

“Now, Maiden! thou may'st live to rue
That thou my hand hast spurned!”
He eyed her with a deadly smile,
And from the chamber turned.

In trembling fear she told what passed
To Eberhard, brave and true,
And Bertha, who had watched her youth,
And best her virtues knew.

'T was wisest deemed at once to leave
Those towers, defenceless, weak;
In Oberwerder's cloisters pale,
A refuge calm to seek.

At early morn, proud Stoltzenfels,
Eager, they left behind—
When a troop of horse came thundering on,
Swift as the rushing wind.

Eberhard, in vain, exposed his life
His mistress dear to aid ;
For what might one against a host—
Swift fell the Pilgrim's blade !

And ere he died, the good old man
Breathed low a fervent prayer
To Heaven to favour Williswind,
So young, so pure and fair !

In tears the Damsel, scarce alive,
Was borne in hapless mood,
To where a tall, half-ruined tower
Dark, solitary, stood.

The Robber-Knight unbarred the gate,
It was a dungeon drear,—
And Williswind and Bertha true,
Were left unfriended there.

Long time they mourned, no hope had they,
When a dark bird fluttered near ;
It pecked the bars—the Captive smiled
To see her playmate dear !

The Raven brought her autumn fruits,
Ripe grapes and berries fair ;
In Bertha's arms she slept secure,
On the dungeon-pavement bare.

The prison bars looked towards the north,
The wind blew chill and keen—
Next morning moss and feathers light
On the flinty floor were seen.

Three nights rolled on—no food was given
Save what the Raven brought—
On the fourth day the Robber came,
His breast with mischief fraught.

He entered—there stood Williswind
Assured, and full of hope—
Three days of penance had no power
To bid her spirit droop !

Again his hated suit he pressed—
The maid was firm and cold :
He broke away—" Another day
Might harsher means unfold !"

Night fell—she slept in happy peace,
Her trust was placed in Heaven,
Knowing that in her utmost need
Mysterious aid was given !

Early next day a Horseman's tramp
Fell faintly on her ear ;
Through the iron bar she gazed afar—
The sounds approached more near.

It was an armèd Knight who sped
Over the level plain ;
The mettled courser flew like wind,
The Rider spurred amain.

Sometimes upon his helmet perched,
A coal-black Raven sate—
Then onward flew, but still in view—
And then appeared to wait.

The Knight, with vizor closed, rode on
After his wingèd guide,
Until he gained the ruined tower
Where Williswind lay hid.

The vizor raised—'t was Ottmar come
His sister lost to save,
Led surely by her sable friend,
The Raven, true and brave !

Ah, sad it seemed, yet dear, to meet
With dungeon bars between !
She poured, while tears o'erflowed her eyes,
Her tale of sorrow keen.

Meanwhile a Rider cleared the steep,
In weeds of nuptial state ;
The Raven shrieked—the Lady cried,
“ The Robber comes too late ! ”

Enraged, Sir Ottmar drew his sword
On that false, recreant Knight ;
He dashed his gauntlet in his face,
And dared him to the fight.

The caitiff-knave grew pale with fear—
He knew his day was done—
They fought—full soon those features grim
Lay blackening in the sun.

Sir Ottmar snatched the ponderous key,
Hung at the Robber's side—
The rusty hinges loudly creaked,
The portal opened wide.

Sudden a cloud of sable birds,
In dark, innumerable flight,
Thick hovered near—their spreading wings
Obscured the noon-day bright.

They pecked the eyes, they drank the blood,
The garments tore away—
Until the cruel Robber-Knight
A bloody skeleton lay.

High o'er the gate of Stoltzenfels
Amid a scene divine,
The Raven's sculptured effigy
Looked down upon the Rhine.

The Peasants came from far and wide
The noble bird to see,
Who saved their well-loved Williswind
In dire extremity.

Ere long the Damsel's hand was sought
By a young and noble Knight,
Whose castle lay beyond the stream,—
One matchless in the fight.

Otho of Braubach won the maid
Whose fame has oft been sung,
Whose deeds of earnest piety
Through the Rhine-land loudly rung.

ILDEGARDE.

Fair Ildegarde hath left her home
At princely Heidelberg, to roam
 In the forest deep and wild—
Ah me! the wind blows icy cold,
Wrapped in her garments' scanty fold,
 She hides her precious child!

A cavern, sheltered from the gale,
Receives the lady, trembling, pale,
 She finds a leafy bed.
Next morn she gathered berries fair,
She rested in the sunny air,
 And, grateful, bowed her head.

Otho, her once kind lord, returned
From battle yestereen.—He spurned
 His wife so loving, true!
For Siegfried, whom he trusted, poured
Dark slanders in his ear. His sword
 On Ildegarde he drew!

Shuddering, he paused—he had no heart
To bid the ruddy life-drops start
Of one, to him so near :
He might not pierce that snowy breast,
To him a holy place of rest,
In other days more dear !

Six weary months dragged slowly on,
Otho, bereft, was sad and lone,
He wept and sighed in vain :
With heart so sore, he brooded o'er
His bitter loss, until no more
He cared to live in pain !

He summoned Siegfried one bright morn,
He bade his huntsman wind the horn,
From Heidelberg he rode :
With ardour fired, he chased the deer,
He galloped on till none were near,
Through pathways rarely trod.

He saw a lady wondrous fair,
Adown her form wild-streamed her hair,
Before a Cross she bent :
Beside her lay a sleeping child,
And a noble hound of aspect mild
Watched both, with look intent.

The Palatine, amazed, drew nigh,
He heard a deep, heart-broken sigh,
'T was Ildegarde he met !
The Lady rose in trembling haste,
Her hand upon the bridle placed—
Her cheek with tears was wet !

“ Now, Otho, list what I shall say !
When thou, alas ! wert far away
By the lofty Pyrenees—
One night the treacherous Siegfried came,—
I thought to swoon for grief and shame—
He wooed me on his knees !”

“ I was alone, deep-wrapped in thee,
And lost in love's sweet reverie—
I shrieked in wild alarm :
My faithful dog by chance was near,
Lion, the true, who knows no fear—
He ^{seized} ~~seized~~ the traitor's arm !”

Seized

“ Confront me with this dastard Knight,
Whose slanders foul have cast a blight
Upon my Husband's name !”—
Scarce had she spoke, when through the glade,
In huntsman's garb of green arrayed,
False-smiling Siegfried came !

But something bade his spirit quail,
With sudden dread his cheek turned pale—
Fierce on him, Lion sprung :
He tore his flesh with furious cry ;
The caitiff's shriek of agony
Through the wild forest rung !

Then noble-hearted Otho knew
Her tear-attested tale was true—
His bosom smote him sore :
Before his spotless wife he knelt,
He owned her pure from dream of guilt—
They met to part no more !

LINES FOR MUSIC.

Break, fond heart ! break, fond heart !
Still the world is cold as ever—
Let hope depart—let tear-drops start,—
Will the world heed thee ?—never, never !

Weep not, but smile ! 't is best to wear
 An aspect proud, a stony eye—
'T is vain to shed the bitter tear,
 Or pour the unregarded sigh !

The broken, weary, have no care,
 Like thee, for woes except their own :
And they too deem that none would share
 The burthen all must bear alone !

The gay and prosperous take no part
 In tales of chilling, blank despair—
The sorrows of a laden heart
 Would only cloud *their* morrow fair !

• Then turn your thoughts to worlds above ;
 Why bid them vainly linger here ?
'T is only for immortal love
 To wipe away the hopeless tear !

UN RAGGIO.

Sonnet.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN.

On Angel-wings, a heavenly vision came,
Swift-passing by me near a crystal stream—
Fate led me thither, as it were a dream,
And by the lucid wave, the undying flame
Seized on my fainting heart.—If love be blame,
Ah! be it mine, since love, with holy beam,
O'er my lone breast hath shed a magic gleam—
If shame it be, I glory in my shame :
My days wane fast and dim—that form so fair
Oft hovers near me in the stilly night,
And for a time hath power to banish care—
Alas, I know not where it winged its flight!—
We met no more—yet still the image bright
Lives in my heart, and pours celestial light!

A CONTRAST.

The homeless wanderer hurries by
With haggard cheek and restless eye :
Her hand is cold, her lips are white,
She draws her scanty garment tight—
In the wide world no friend hath she
To aid her last extremity !

The smile assumed to hide despair,
The faltering tone, the wildered air,
All tell that in her utmost need,
She knows 't is vain her cause to plead :
That none amid the throng hath part
With sorrow of a broken heart !

Poor wanderer sad ! thine eye reveals
A tale of woe—the tear-drop steals
Adown thy pallid face, while thou
Would'st fain confide, in accents low,
Thy hapless case, how all are gone,
And thou art left unfriended, lone !

No ray of light streams through the gloom !
It is the darkness of the tomb,
Without its deep and dreamless rest,
Safe refuge of a heart opprest !
She turns her haggard eye to Heaven,
For *her* no earthly home is given !

Hark, from yon palace-windows high
Ring notes of festive revelry !
A hundred tapers glimmer bright,
Pouring abroad a flood of light :
There, all is mirth, *they* know no care,
Nor dream of want and gaunt despair !

'T is strange that in one narrow street
Extremes so wide apart should meet—
Below, the meek, heart-laden sigh,
Above, loud reckless revelry !
Yet all are children of the same ;
From one high source the spirit came.

A glittering equipage draws near,
The prancing steeds the pavement tear—
In haste the wanderer steps aside ;
Two liveried knaves, elate with pride,
Thrust on the fragile, trembling form
That shrinks before the coming storm.

She turns away—her cup is full :
She staggers on—her sense grows dull :
While heavenly voices fill her ear,
The music of a distant sphere—
Sore-tried, released, her spirit flies
On angel-wings, beyond the skies !

The neighbouring revelry goes on
Until the day is well begun :
At first some rumour vague is heard
Of one just dead—" Such things occurred
Too often—Oh ! how very sad !—
Was no one by ?—so thinly clad !"

" 'T is strange—with none to aid her near—
The night Police at fault, I fear !"—
The heedless revel swells amain
'Mid frequent draughts of bright champagne ;
Till rosy cheeks wax pale and wan,
And tapers fade before the dawn.

LINES FOR MUSIC.

My bark draws near the shores of France,
The home renowned of old romance,
Of courteous spirits, easy grace,—
The wanderer's pleasant resting place !

Full twenty years have passed away
Since first, in manhood's early day,
My bark approached the level shore,
Where the quaint piles of Calais tower.

Then love and friendship shed their light,
And made each passing moment bright—
Gay-hearted mirth looked on—no fear
To chill—no retrospection drear !

And e'en the wild and barren strand
Seemed portal of some fairy land,
With Italy and Rome in view,—
And all seemed fair, for all was new.

But now 't is changed—the early glow
Of youth is gone! with footstep slow,
Dim age creeps on—the heart is sore,
And brilliant visions charm no more!

WANDERING ECHOES.

LINES FOR MUSIC.

Wandering Echoes, bring again
Over the desert land of pain,
Dear voices gone of friends beloved,
And lost for aye when tried and proved;
Call back one fleeting smile of days of old,
Ere yet the spirit drooped—the heart grew cold!

Wandering Echoes, bring once more
Forgotten tones of days of yore,
The music-tones of hope and truth—
Call back the visions fair of youth:—
Dreams of the spell-bound Past, when all seemed bright,
And Time flew swift on rosy pinion light!

COUNT ZARO.

A FRAGMENT IN TWO PARTS.

"Guard well, O Heir of Eternity, the portal of sin—the thought ! From the thought to the deed, the subtler thy brain, and the bolder thy courage, the briefer and straighter is the way."—*Bulwer's Lucretia*.

Part First.

THE STORM.

Wild and fierce the tempest roars,
And swift its vengeful fury pours :
Impervious night broods over all,
Veiling the sky in a funeral pall :
Nor moon, nor glimmering stars appear
To break the waste of darkness drear—
Sure 't is a night of wrath and fear !

Hark ! the chime of midnight tolls,
As far away the thunder rolls ;
Now lightnings flash redoubled light,
Wrapping the earth in a vesture white.
Amid the frequent glare, a form
Shows like the spirit of the storm—

A Horseman garbed in mantle red,
His wild locks streaming round his head :
Nor clad to brave such fearful night,
For, 'neath the mantle, glitters bright
A silken vest, with gems bedight—
And broidered sandals gird his feet,
For bower, or courtly banquet meet !

Few moments darkness—then a flash
Swift followed by the thunder's crash—
And lo ! the stranger pacing on
To a vast forest, dark and lone :
Leaving a castle far behind,
Whose towers rock to the howling wind.
And yet nor Cavalier nor steed
The raving tempest deign to heed :
But smiles the rider scornfully,
Mocking the storm that rages high.
As though it were his element,
The courser steps with proud neck bent—
In housings black, with gold bedecked—
His eye of fire—his ears erect !

* * * * *

The storm seems hushed to transient peace ;
For a brief space the lightnings cease ;
The coal-black charger's measured tramp
Alone sounds hollow o'er the swamp—
On, on they go with heavy tread,
Till forest branches overhead,
Swinging to the darkened sky,
Moan forth their fitful melody.

A muffled bell sounds dim afar,
Slow-booming through the murky air.
On, on they go—pale lights are seen
High streaming 'mid the foliage green :
Sudden a mighty peal of thunder
Rends the veil of night asunder :
The lightning shows amid the storm,
Fearless, unbent, the stranger's form,
Dismounted by an antique fane,
A mouldering pile of days long gone—
And hark ! in wild, unearthly tone,
Rings high, a harsh, discordant strain,
A choral chaunt, so dismal, drear,
Had bade the stoutest quail with fear :
It sounded not like voice of prayer,
But yell of reckless, wild despair !

What Zaro witnessed, guard us well!
No mortal tongue may ever tell:—
Or wherefore went he there alone
At spectral midnight ere be known;
Ruled by some dark, mysterious spell,
Some spirit mightier than his own!
A ramble wild and strange, I ween,
For he was wed but yestere'en—
Why leave so soon his blooming bride,
By night 'mid tempests fierce to ride!
Surely on no good errand bent
The proud and gloomy Zaro went
To yon grim wood, while raged the storm
So rudely, they who heard it quaked,
And inly blessed themselves from harm,
Marvelling what spell its sudden fury waked!

* * * * *

The tempest, late so wild and loud,
Has sunk to rest—from fleecy cloud
Emerging, smiles the moon o'er dell,
And wood, and snow-clad pinnacle:

The gathered clouds lie calm and still,
Their white wings folded o'er the hill :
All nature seems at rest again,—
The floweret, heavy yet with rain,
Droops moveless 'neath the quiet sky,
No breath of air to wave it dry.

And homeward now, ere break of day,
All changed, Count Zaro bends his way :
His eye is dimmed, his vigour spent,
His frame with nameless horror bent :
And his bewildered glance full well
Gives note of things too dark to tell !
What he hath seen in that haunted fane
He may not dare to breathe again—
For were it told to mortal ear,
Nature would swoon with deadly fear,—
And e'en the bravest spirit quail
To hear the wild and ghastly tale !

And now, beneath the dawn's pale beam,
A castle's turrets faintly gleam :
On Zaro's ear no life-sounds fall,
As on he nears his feudal hall,

Save of the bird's first early note
Heard fitful through the mists that float
Above the streamlet's willowy bed,
And mark from far its devious way
To where blue Garda's lake lies spread,
A mirror to the brightening day.

The mount is cleared at lightning speed—
Unbidden now, the fiery steed,
By storm untamed, or rider's thrall,
Stands quiet by the castle wall.
On noiseless hinge the ponderous gate
Flies back, nor bids the master wait :
Although no summons might be heard—
Within no stealthy footstep stirred.

Ere many moments more are past,
Zaro hath spurned the stair in haste :
He bends him o'er the couch where lies
His bride, Xarina, her sweet eyes
In slumber veiled that calms each sense,
The blest repose of innocence !
At his approach, a shudder creeps
Through all her frame, while yet she sleeps :

As when a raven's heavy wing
Is seen a passing shade to fling
O'er a blue lake's unruffled breast,
Whose limpid waters lie at rest.

Part Second.

THE SUMMONS.

A hundred guests of high degree,
Fair Milan's old nobility,
Met, with their trains, in Zaro's hall,
To grace a princely festival.
The vaulted roof, unused so long
To notes of revelry and song,
Echoed to peals of mirth again ;
Loud rang the minstrel's joyous strain,
While thousand tapers lent their light,
Changing to brilliant day the night.

Rich-trophied banners, reared on high,
Ensigns of ancient Chivalry,
Stirred by the trumpet's breath,
Waved 'mid the silver cresset's blaze
Over the glittering throng beneath,
And told of deeds of other days,
When, foremost in the pious band,
Zaro's brave lineage sought the holy land.

And now the stately dance had ceased,
It was the welcome hour to feast,
And pledge the wine cup high :
At Zaro's side his lovely bride,
Xarina, sate, in dazzling pride,
Beneath a blazoned canopy :
And she, enraptured with the scene,
To her young thought so strange, so fair,
With sparkling eye, and childlike mien,
And winning smile, and artless air,
Would whisper oft her haughty lord,
Who scarcely deigned to utter word,
Or greet the guests who came from far,
Save with such distant courtesy,
Such cold reserve, demeanour high,

As bade them shrink amid the dance,
Glad to escape that chilling glance :
And left them, though they scarce knew why,
No wish again to meet the eye,
Or share the scanty speech of one
Whose gloomy dreams were known to none !

He was a feudal Chief of power,
Last of a race of old renown,
That once had worn the ducal crown
Where Brescia's ancient ramparts tower,
And ruled in fierce, despotic pride,
With many a regal house allied.
But his brow was dark, and cold his mien,—
More fitted awe than love to win,—
And past were his youthful years :
While his fair bride had scarcely seen
Four lustres, and her life had been
Alternate smiles and tears.
When bidden first to bless his flame,
Of love nought knew she save the name—
Oh ! she was fair and purely bred,
As snowdrop in its wintry bed :—
Stainless as fleecy clouds that sail
O'er summer skies in the moonlight pale !

Though Zaro's prime was long since past,
Time, who spares none, had scarcely traced
One furrow on his lofty brow,
Or tinged his raven locks with snow.
Firm was his step, his eye yet bright,
His arm unconquered in the fight.
The sculptured features, pale, severe—
The thoughtful brow, sublime, austere,
Retained e'en yet their former mould
Of youthful grace, and beauty rare
In manly form—but something told
That age and dreary thought were there—
The dark dream of some agony
That only with himself could die—
A wound that he alone could deal,
Which time possessed no power to heal!

So proud was he, he scorned the thought
Of eminence by birthright bought :
For lowly born, by might of mind
He still had soared above his kind.
No friends were his—he asked for none,
By nature formed to stand alone—
Like giant rock that rearing far
Its cloudy pinnacle in air

Beyond the reach of mortal ken,
Its base in restless ocean bathed,
Still towers 'mid tempests' wrath, unscathed,
Save by the fires that lurk within.

So Zaro towered—like hell's dark Prince
Amid the realms of endless gloom,
Alone, in drear pre-eminence,
A sad and ghastly doom !
Aloof he held him, cold and proud,
The awe and wonder of the crowd—
And none sought him—for who would seek
To bide by some lone Alpine peak,
'Mid tracts where once volcanic fire
Had scattered wide destructive ire ;
And now, in desolation drear,
Nought but dim wastes of snow appear !
Fit emblem of the human heart,
Where gathers ice when flames depart.

Twelve months, since he was wed, were flown,
For hap what may, will Time speed on !
And now it seemed a gentler train
Of thought inspired his heart again :
Or if the Past rose up to fill
His brain with harrowing thoughts, and chill

His breast with blank despair,
E'en then, with one sweet look, his bride
Scattered his dreams like shapes of air :
As if no evil thought might bide
Near one so pure and fair !
Until he almost deemed him free
From the thralldom of his destiny :—
From fetters he, with hand profane,
Reckless, around his soul had twined ;
A galling and mysterious chain,
Which he who forged might not unbind.

And he the man of might, the stern,
Of conquering will, and bearing high,
Oft to his gentle mate would turn—
Oh, wondrous might of purity !
Pleasing himself that in her smile,
So child-like, sweet, some magic dwelt
Powerful to lull the dreams of guilt,
And for one painless hour beguile
The busy fiend that lurked within—
The memory of some fearful sin,
Which for long years of hopeless gloom
Had shed the darkness of the tomb
Over his soul, without its rest :
And that to him were haven blest,
But for the thought of what sad doom

Awaited him, its slumber o'er,
When he should wake to sleep no more !
Till as the nights rolled calmly by
And sleep unbroken blessed his bed,
Wrapped in a blind security,
Scarce looked he to the midnight hour with dread.

* * * * *

This eve, to glad his beauteous bride,
A crowd of guests, from far and wide,
At his unwonted bidding came,
Curious to view the foreign dame,
Who, spite of rumours dark, would dare,
Mysterious Zaro's lot to share.
The dance was o'er, the feast rang high
'Mid song and stately revelry :
And fresh from Garda's waters blue,
The breath of evening wandered through
The open casements fitfully :
And with the fountain's airy play,
Scattered the lingering heats of day.
The moon rolled calmly through the sky,
The glorious moon of Italy :
When, as the midnight hour drew nigh,

A sudden darkness filled the air,
And veiled the heavens, but now so fair.
Soon an unwonted gloom fell o'er
The assembled guests, so blithe before.
A few remarks that seemed to die
In words that scarcely asked reply,
And all was still—yet none knew why!
E'en they who served the banquet paused,
Marvelling what strange event had caused
Throughout the hall such silence drear
As filled each breast with nameless fear—
When a steed's loud neighing clear was heard
Amid the rising wind that stirred
The hoary pines, and bade them moan
With a wild, unearthly tone.

While all in anxious wonder sate,
One rose amid the throng—a guest
Till now unnoticed, though so late—
Who stood with arms crossed o'er his breast :
'T was strange that none had marked till now
That figure clad in strange attire,
That towering form and beetling brow,
Those orbs that gleamed like coals of fire !
He eyed the haughty Chief awhile,
Then beckoned him with mocking smile :

And Zaro dropped the cup of gold,
While sudden paled his aspect bold.
Few moments sate he, mute, aghast,
As stricken by electric blast :
Then, starting from that stony trance,
He threw around one fearful glance—
A spasm wrung his rigid brow :
But soon 't was past, unconquered pride
Resumed its sway, and all defied,
Though to a mightier he must bow !
As he left the hall with footstep slow,
His servant Ugo o'er him threw,
Unasked, a cloak of scarlet hue—
Ugo, who rarely proffered word,
Save to his dark and gloomy lord,
And like him dwelt apart, unknown—
But oft in Zaro's chamber lone,
At dead of night had listeners heard
His voice, whose mocking accents deep
Had bade with fear their life-blood creep.

The guests all silent and amazed
Still on their host in wonder gazed,
As he left the bright-illuminated hall
To brave the storm and plashing rain,
The thunder-peal that rolled amain
In tones the stoutest might appal !

Anon loud rattled through the court
A charger's iron tread,
Spurning the ground with angry snort,
As through the gates he sped!
All turned to Ugo anxiously—
For the Unknown, whose demon-eye
Bade Zaro tremble and obey,
Had disappeared, though none could say
They saw him quit the banquet-hall,
Where late he stood, erect and tall.

In breathless fear the Lady sate,
When Ugo whispered in her ear
His Master's parting words—"that late
He should return—no cause for fear—
Oft had he braved worse storms—and prayed
She would at once retire to rest,
By the wild tempest undismayed—"
Obedient to her lord's behest,
Xarina rose to leave the hall,
Smiling adieu to each nobler guest,
When to crown the horrors of the night,
A mighty gust extinguished all
The silver-sculptured founts of light:

And 'mid the tumult loud, each sought
His couch, with gloomy presage fraught.
That night all vainly courted sleep,—
What bade them restless vigil keep?
It seemed that ne'er so dull had crept
Time's footstep—they had deemed he slept,
Had not at length his iron tongue
Amid the fitful tempest rung,
Tolling the spectral hour of one,
Proclaiming loud an hour was gone
On leaden wing, since Zoro rode
Amid the storm—What might it bode?—
'T was strange, in festal garment dight,
To brave the perils of the night,
Alone, with no attendant train,
While raved the wind and beat the rain!

The strife of air slow died away—
The wondering guests uncertain lay,
Waiting in fear the lingering day—
 When, as chimed the second hour,
A cry of fear, so deadly, wild,
As every heart with terror chilled,
 Rang high from the Lady's bower—

And they who watched in anxious fear,
Quick answering to that outcry drear,
Beheld their mistress scared and pale,
Her eye distent and fixed on space,
As if she vainly sought to trace
Some shape had made her bosom quail—
Some fearful, withering sight that bade
The hues of life and health to fade
In cheeks where lately bloomed the rose,
Whose root is in the heart's repose.
Yet there in truth had entered none
Of human form—the hall alone
Where the maidens stood in silent dread
Could to the nuptial chamber lead—
And that which caused her mortal fright
Had passed, if living, before their sight !

Cold drops bedewed Xarina's brow,—
Her cheek was white as fresh-fallen snow :
So deep in death-like swoon she lay,
It seemed the spirit had passed away,
Driven rudely from its beauteous shrine,
Where erst it dwelt, unstained, divine.
At length the frail and quivering frame
Slowly awoke to sense—Then came

The pangs of timeless birth—the sigh
 Of agonized humanity.
 After a fearful contest, life
 Prevailed amid the doubtful strife.
 A Priest of piety austere
 Who watched the couch when Death seemed near,
 At intervals, in secret heard
 A tale his soul with horror stirred,
 And sent him to his cell to pray
 In penance *

Breathe o'er a blade of steel high wrought,
 The vapours pass as swift as thought,
 Leaving the unstained surface free,
 And bright in pristine purity—
 But hide it in some cave profound,
 Where only noxious airs abound,
 Where penetrates no genial ray
 To chase the heavy damps away,
 And soon the lingering vapours cleave
 To the dimmed metal, till they leave

* A considerable *hiatus valde defendus* occurs here in the MS., which for several pages is quite illegible. After a lapse of several years the narrative is continued. Should the intervening links be found, the remainder of the story may at some future time be offered to the public.

No trace of that once shone so bright
And gleaming with reflected light.
So with the spirit—innate power
Is given in danger's trying hour,
To banish swift the dreams of night
That rise to dim its heavenly light :
But stealing on with pace so slow,
Their presence we should scarcely know,
Did not the guardian dread of wrong
Arouse the slumbering soul ere long,
And in mysterious whispers tell
The foe is near it should expel,
Ere it has seized the faltering heart
And entered, never to depart.

Ah ! did *we* not unbar the gate,
Closing it only when too late,
And the dark host hath entered in,
The legions of victorious sin,
For ever might they knock in vain,
Or lie in wait the soul to gain :
But we admit them one by one
Until the citadel is won,
And evil thoughts in darksome train
Have gathered till the light is gone

That aids the spirit to repel,
As with a shield, those dreams of hell :
Which, once they have engrossed the soul,
Gain strength beyond our weak control.
Though we be free for one brief day,
Still evil thoughts resume their sway,
Coming when we expect them least,
Their baneful power tenfold increased.
Then guard *the thought*, the gate of sin,
Lest evil dreams should entrance win,
To haunt the breast for evermore
And veil the spirit, born to soar,
In the dark shadow of the tomb,
Quenching its light in endless gloom.

ON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF AN OLD
FRIEND.

All those who love us best depart,
The cold are left behind,
E'en when the chilled and doubting heart
None to replace, may find :
And when we need it most, 't is vain to move
The hard, strange world, to sympathy and love.

In the brief season of our youth,
Ere boyhood's dream is o'er,
Ere yet the trust in other's truth
Fades, to revive no more.
Then, and then only, may we hope to bind
In friendship's flowery wreath the guileless mind.

Another, and another dies,
Till all we prized are gone :
The light of love like meteor flies,
Leaving us sad and lone ;
Yet it were selfish to repine for those
Who, freed and blest, now taste sublime repose.

OLD DAYS ON NOISELESS WING.

Old days, on noiseless wing, have passed away,
Yet looking back, it seems but yesterday
Since bright and cordial faces gleamed around,
And hope could bid the joyous spirit bound !

Ah me ! what sad and dreary change hath come—
In place of lightsome fancies, dreams of gloom !
The aching void we ne'er again may fill,
And many a vain regret that haunts us still !

The gay to-morrow of the mind is gone,
The memory of the past remains alone :
No tie to bind—a cold and cheerless doom—
No refuge, save the dark and silent tomb.

And so 't will be with many yet unborn,
To walk in hope, then sink, 'mid cares, forlorn :
Yet some deep whisper tells that we again
May rise to light and life, and freed from pain.

THE LEGEND OF THE WICKED LORD OF
MONTRAVAL.

The sky is dark, the moon o'ercast,
The clouds are gathering thick and fast :
A few big, heavy drops of rain
Fall soft upon the sandy plain ;
While travellers, benighted, haste,
Over the wild, unsheltered waste,
Some refuge safe to gain.

Now rolls the thunder-peal afar,
Faint lightnings glimmer through the air ;
A maiden, clad in vesture white,
Pallid and trembling, braves the night :
And, all alone, that fragile form,
Shrinks 'mid the loud voice of the storm,
That maiden, young and fair !

Why flies she o'er the barren plain,
Through rising wind and drifting rain,
With haggard cheek and stony eye,
Her head turned backward anxiously ?
And none are near at this lone hour
To aid, though distant tempests lour,
The maid in her extremity !

Lit by the frequent lightning-glare,
A castle's turrets gleam in air ;
High-seated on the mountain's brow,
Unmoved by shock of stormy gale,
The feudal keep of Montraval
Frowns o'er the wide champaign below,
And rules in pride the vale.

The tramp of horsemen sounds afar,
Amid the tempest's fitful war,
Trembling with fear, the maiden stops,
And listens, while the heavy drops
Fall faster on the thirsty ground ;
Fainting, aghast, she looks around,
And sees a glimmering star.

The light comes near—a veil is flung
Over her head, in dark folds hung—
She feels herself borne swift along
Safe from the tempest's rage: a song,
Low, dreamlike, fall upon her ear, *falls*
And the weird music, strange to hear,
Causes no thrill of fear!

But slumber deep o'erpowers the maid,
On a fragrant bed of rose-leaves laid—
All night the same mysterious strain
Sighs fitful in her ear—again
Fierce Raymond, Lord of Montraval,
In dreams, pursues her o'er the plain,
His cheek with anger pale.

In fevered sleep, she seems to stand,
Pallid and trembling, cold with fright,
Before the altar—her small hand
Clasped by her impious uncle, tight,—
A captive, in his power alone:
While sounds so strange, in thrilling tone,
That song in tongue unknown!

The false Priest drops the sacred book—
The Baron stands with stony look—
And none to move or speak have power :
Again, in eager haste she flies,
Swift down the steepy path she hies,
To dare the storm that 'gins to lour
The dark and threatening skies !

At early morn the maiden wakes,
As sunny day unclouded breaks
Over the distant eastern hills,
And lights with sparks the fuming rills :
The morning freshness bathes her brow,
She rises from her flower-bed low,
And praise her bosom fills !

By unseen hands a meal is spread
Of sunny fruits and snow-white bread ;
And honied milk, a nectar-draught,
The gods themselves had eager quaffed,
Is served in cup of crystal pure ;
And piles of clustering bunches red,
The sight and smell allure.

A form appears of beauty rare,
Long elfin locks of snowy hair,
White as the alabaster throat,
Adown the sculptured shoulders float :
The ruddy tint is fresh and fair,
Yet full a hundred years have shed,
 Their frosts upon the head.

The Lady speaks in accents deep,—
The sounds that haunted Aline's sleep !
Surveying her with aspect mild,
As mother lone regards her child :—
“ Now hear me, Aline, it was I
Released thee from captivity,
 When deadly foes were nigh ! ”

“ This day the Knight of Castillon
Comes back from war, the battle won.
To him thy piteous plight I told
In dreams, to rouse his spirit bold :—
He loves thee well—thy cruel thrall
We yet may break, and Montraval
 Perchance, ere long, may fall ! ”

“ But take these roses twain—the one
When smelt, will lead thee on unknown,
Invisible to mortal eye,
By magic-woven agency ;—
The other gives thy form to view,
Inspired with strength and courage new,
And fraught with purpose high ! ”

“ Thy way is to yon fortified hall,
The lair of wicked Montraval—
Undaunted, enter—shake off fear,
For none shall know when thou art there,
The red rose veils thy form from sight,
The other bids thee straight appear—
Go now, and claim thy right ! ”

The music fades—the sound is gone—
Aline is in the grot alone :
She looks around, the walls gleam bright,
And crusted gems shed trembling light :
A wide and lofty passage leads
To where the varied landscape spreads
Beyond the broad Dordogne.

At the cavern's mouth a palfrey stands,
In velvet housings, trapped with gold,
And decked with pearl-embroidered bands,
A gentle steed, of courage bold :
He kneels before the wondering maid—
She smiles and mounts, yet half afraid,
Her pulse throbs faint and cold.

The courser speeds across the plain,
Uncurbed by galling bit or rein—
Fleet as the wind, he hurries on
Towards the strong walls of Castillon :
Her lover folds her in his arms,
With rapture clasps those peerless charms—
She greets her own again !

William of Castillon hath come
In haste to his paternal home,
Warned by a dream. He found Aline
No more was there—where gone, none knew !
The heart-struck lover wept anew,—
For she from early youth had been
A friend so pure, so true !

They were betrothed, their vows were given
Twelve months before, in sight of Heaven ;
But duty called him far away,
And duty's call brooked no delay :
When he was gone, she oft would pray,
The battle won, he might return,
And she might cease to mourn.

And poor Aline is rightful heir
Of Montraval's dominion fair !
An orphan left, with none to aid—
The Lady of Castillon prayed
Her gallant son, the good and brave,
Might grow in manly strength to save
One wronged and deep betrayed.

Their greetings o'er, the maiden tells
A tale his breast with wonder fills,
How she by night was borne away,
To be immured from light of day,—
How to the altar dragged by force
By one who never knew remorse,
She fled in wild dismay.

Two hours soon melt in converse sweet !
Again the magic notes peal high,
The palfrey neighs impatiently—
They part, the pair so lately met !
The maid, in tears, the red rose smells,—
No rein his path the courser tells,
Like cloud, he seems to fly !

'Tis summer twilight's hour serene—
Assured with pious hope, Aline,
Enters the fortress gates unseen :
She passes noiseless through the hall
Where the dark Lord of Montraval,
High seated in baronial state,
Prolongs the banquet late.

Again the low, sweet strain she hears,
Which sounded on her slumbering ears,
Soft-floating through the corridor
Beyond the hall—an open door
Leads thence into a vaulted room,
Where a chest, with jewels studded o'er,
Shows dimly through the gloom.

The mystic music still her guide—
She sees a parchment—loud and near
Swell the harmonious numbers clear !
Her name upon the scroll descried,
She draws it forth in eager haste—
The treasure in her bosom placed,
She droops with sudden fear !

Soon she revives—the feast is done,
The wicked orgies foul begun :
She hears a sharp and piercing cry,
The shriek of mortal agony :
Two captured travellers are there ;
Raymond no tortures dire will spare
To wring a ransom high.

She pauses at the portal high
Irresolute—the night draws nigh—
She must begone—her woman's heart
Is weak to see the life-drop start
And hear the scream of deadly pain—
The strife of thought o'erpowers her brain ;
She droops, and sinks again.

A prisoner lies upon the floor,
His form with flint-stones covered o'er,
And a stalwart knave, with bloody hands,
With one foot on the captive stands,
Prepared at Raymond's order dread,
With cruel taunt, and eye of fire,
To bid the unlucky wight expire
 Beneath his merciless tread.

The other, hung up by the ear,*
Fills the wide hall with outcries drear—
When the magic notes sound through the din ;
Inspired with sudden nerve, Aline
Glides swiftly on : right glad is she
To escape the dreadful revelry
 That chills her breast with fear !

'T is joy to breathe the freshening air
And quit the ruthless tyrant's lair !
Aline descends the rocky steep,
The evening breezes round her sweep,
Dispelling fast dark dreams of ill :
While grateful thoughts her bosom fill,
 She breathes a silent prayer !

* See Note.

Ere long she gains the level plain,
She mounts the milk-white steed again—
Swift as the wind the palfrey flies,
With easy motion hurrying on,—
Like her, unseen by human eyes,
Till the pale moonbeams shine upon
The towers of Castillon.

Next day the parchment-scroll is read ;
By the Royal Court it is decreed
Aline is lawful heir of all
The broad domains of Montraval :
But Raymond hears and is unmoved,
He cares not that her birth is proved,
By fight he 'll stand or fall !

The Knight of Castillon is brave
But gentle, polished as his glave ;
Unmindful he of interest mean,
He only dreams of sweet Aline :
Love nerves his arm with conquering might,
Raymond he dares to single fight,
To yield, or prove his right.

The lists are set, the nobles met,
The chosen umpires sit aloft :
Aline's pale cheeks with tears are wet,
Humbly she bends, and prays full oft ;
And Castillon, in armour dight,
His courage as his cuirass bright,
Stands there, her own true knight !

The hour is past, and Montraval
Hath not appeared. His archers tall
Are there, in martial order filed ;
When a strain of music, loud and wild,
Echoes from far—a charger's tread
Approaches near—the rider's head
Droops as if life were fled.

The steel-gloved hands still grasp the mane,
The rigid knees their hold retain ;
Low on the horse's bleeding side,
The spur-wounds open deep and wide :
Snorting with pain, half wild with fright,
The charger clears the boundary light,
Where stands Castillon's Knight.

Both horse and rider prostrate fall,—
The vizor raised, the umpires know
In the gigantic form laid low,
The once proud Lord of Montraval :
Few sanguine drops ooze from the lips,
The cold sweat from the forehead drips,
Grim Death hath dropped his pall !

Next day a Priest doth bless the pair,
At last in holy union bound :—
Notes of strange music fill the air,
The noble couple look around—
The Lady of the Grotto stands
Beside them with uplifted hands,—
She breathes o'er both a prayer !

THE MOONLIGHT WREATH PLAYS
BRIGHTLY O'ER.

BARCAROLLE.

The moonlight wreath plays brightly o'er
The blue Venetian seas,
And fairy note of mandolin
Soft trembles on the breeze.

Haste, Gondolier, unmoor thy bark,
Row swift athwart the brine :
From distance steals upon the ear
A melody divine !

Row swiftly on—in silence die
The wild and rapturous notes :
Triumphant now, they soar again,
Far off the echo floats.

Full many a charm to soothe the breast,
Is thine, O Italy !
Thy orange groves and haunted streams,
Thy hills, and deep-blue sky !

Thy ruins grey, where dwelt of old,
A people, brave and free :
Thy treasure rare of various art,
Thy immemorial sea !

Why linger in dark, northern climes,
Where all seems cold and drear,—
And dreams of fancy rarely come
The lonely heart to cheer !

PHILIP OF AVALLON.

The valiant Knight of Avallon
Mourns in his stately hall :
The voices of his home are gone,
He sits and ponders, sad and lone,
The clouds of sorrow fall.

His early friends are dead—No more
Love gives its answering note :
The heart with many griefs is sore ;
In silent grief, he muses o'er
His dreary, hopeless lot.

The chance is played, the game is lost,
Old age, unblest, remains :
His dearly-cherished visions crossed,
He shrinks like one on wild seas tossed,
From tears he scarce refrains.

Why wed at fifty years a maid
Who but four lustres knew ?
His trusting heart was not afraid,
Nor long in vain the suitor prayed—
He gave his love so true !

Though Time his chilling frosts hath shed,
The moulded form is slight—
Though snowy locks curl round the head,
And wrinkles o'er the brow are spread,
His lamp of life burns bright.

The night is dark, the wind raves high,
Cold is the wintry air ;
He hears a plaintive melody,
In faltering accents murmuring by,
That calls back days more fair.

The notes swell high above the gale,—

He looks out in the storm :

Swift o'er the sky thin vapours sail,

When by the fitful moonlight pale,

He sees a female form.

Sudden the voice hath ceased—the wind

Slow sinks, and dies away :

Strange dreams and memories haunt the mind,

Till slumber comes his frame to bind

At break of welcome day.

Next night the voice is heard again,

The well-known melody—

Again the third—a tone of pain

Now sighs amid the broken strain,

As it wanders, mournful, by.

Surprised, the Knight of Avallon

His trusty Warder calls :

He bids him seek the wanderer lone—

Who pours the thrilling notes, long-known,

Whose sound his soul enthrals !

Trembling, she enters, pallid, worn—

She droops, and fades away :

And Philip's heart with grief is torn,

He sees his still-loved Agnes borne,

A form of lifeless clay !

She sinned and fell, remorse soon came ;

Her faithless lover fled ;—

Dwelling upon the past with shame,

She scorned her base and transient flame—

Her heart with anguish bled.

Her tale of guilt is briefly told,

A frequent tale, and true :

Ere long, her lover false grew cold,

Though young, his heart in vice was old,

And she was left to rue.

Poor Agnes dwelt upon the past

With pangs of grief so sore ;

Though all was lost, fond memory traced

The happy days that flew so fast,

Gone, to return no more !

She thought on Philip, good and true,
Who gave her all his love :
His golden heart full well she knew,
She pondered long what best to do
Her penitence to prove.

Two cheerless years dragged slowly on,
'Mid sighs of vain regret :
The buoyant spring of life was gone,
And earthly joy for aye was flown,
Her cheeks with tears were wet.

She knew the last dim hour drew nigh—
A dream flashed o'er her brain :
Humbly she breathed a prayer to die,
When her deep-injured lord was nigh,—
Her prayer was not in vain !

PHANTOM VOICES.

At midnight, oft we seem to hear
 Dim echoes wandering by,
The music of another sphere
 Floats near us, fitfully :
And round the couch, where rests the drooping head,
Come lingering voices of the gentle dead.

Whence are the voices, strange and deep,
 That haunt the weary breast,
At night's lone hour, ere balmy sleep
 Hath lulled the mind opprest,—
Telling a tale of years long past away,
And early dreams of childhood's happy day ?

From the far spirit-land they come,
 Borne on the rising breeze :
Their angel-whispers, through the gloom,
 Sigh 'mid the spell-bound trees :
An anthem wild the elfin branches pour,
And the forest-music tells of days of yore.

Such spirit-tones are ofttimes ~~heard~~ *felt*
When grief the bosom weighs ;
They come the laden heart to melt,
And lift the thought to praise :
Then at the midnight hour we seem to hear
The notes of love in early childhood dear.

The phantom voices of the dead
Mysterious hover near,—
When holy tears for friends are shed,
They haunt the dreaming ear :
Deep-rapt in thought, we hail the well-known strain,
And sigh to hear the tones of long-lost love again !

SABELLA.

Sabella droops, her light is flown,
Slowly she fades away :
Her cheek is pale, for aye is gone
The spirit's airy play !

She mourns amid her solitude
Long-cherished hopes deceived :
In dreary mood she loves to brood
O'er dreams she had believed.

She gave her heart—the gift was scorned,
She knew her prayer was vain ;
Her trusting love was not returned,
Hope came not back again.

Deserted, sad, with bruised heart,
She bears her lot alone :
Dark thoughts return, the tear-drops start,
Her spirit's joy is flown !

'TIS SAD TO THINK HOW SWIFTLY FLY.

'T is sad to think how swiftly fly
The golden days of life :
How when the dreary goal is nigh,
Still louder grows the strife !

The tide of evil swells amain,—
Hopes fade, long counted on ;
Death comes to leave an age of pain,—
Soon all we loved are gone.

The trembling spirit waxes cold
When the spring of life runs slow ;
No more we dare with courage bold
Repay the friendly blow.

When weighed by gathering cares, and lone,
Depressed with anxious care,
It glooms the heart to know that none
Are left our griefs to share.

And faltering, sad, we hope in vain
One spirit true to bind ;
Chilled friendship never warms again,
Love changes like the wind.

'T is best to seek in solitude
The soul's serene repose,
And find, afar from contact rude,
What peace from home-thought flows.

Forgetting pangs which did not last,
To dwell on all was fair,
Deep-pondering o'er the dreamy past,
And days unknown to care.

And on time's shadowy canvas view
The fairy scenes of old,
The Angel-smile, the soul-look true,
Within the heart enrolled !

BARCAROLLE.

Linda, haste ! the hour is late,
The Gondoliers impatient wait :
Linda, haste ! the moon is bright,
The sea is calm, the zephyr light !

The sultry glare of day is past—
See, where the moon her path hath traced
Over the gently-heaving deep,
While balmy airs from distance creep !

Be ours the fair Italian night,
Too swift the charmed hours take flight,—
Let us embark, and tranquil glide,
Together o'er the sparkling tide !

And, Linda, touch thy light guitar,
Bid music wander through the air—
Sing me the lay I loved to hear,
Recal the dreams to memory dear !

THE END.

NOTES.

PAGE 12.

"O precious essence, juice divine!"

The outline of this story—namely, the two different modes of testing the virtue of the elixir of youth—is taken from a collection of tales in manuscript, discovered amongst the archives of a monastery at Padua about a century and a half ago. The author admits the infallibility of the divine balsam, but regrets the extreme difficulty attending its successful application. He considers that it could scarcely be confided to the care of a wife, however affectionate might have been her previous conduct.

The belief in alchemy was very prevalent during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The following incident is taken from a work entitled *Hermippus Redivivus*:—"An odd accident occurred at Venice about the year 1685, which caused a great sensation there, and which deserves to be rescued from oblivion. The great freedom and facility with which all persons who are able to make a good appearance live in that city is known sufficiently to all those who happen to be acquainted with it; such, therefore, will not be surprised that a stranger, whose previous history was totally unknown, named Gualdi, should have made a considerable figure there, and been admitted into the best society of the place. He remained some weeks at Venice, and three things were remarked in his conduct—the first was, that he possessed a small collection of valuable pictures, which he readily showed to anybody who desired it; the next, that he was perfectly versed in all arts and sciences,

and spoke on every subject with such promptness and sagacity as astonished all who heard him ; and it was, in the third place, observed, that he never wrote or received any letters, never desired any credit, or made use of bills of exchange, but paid for everything in ready money, and lived decently, though not splendidly."

" This gentleman met one day at a coffee-house in the Piazza di San Marco a Venetian nobleman of high rank, who was an excellent judge of pictures. He expressed a wish to see the collection of Signor Gualdi, to which the latter readily consented. After the Venetian had examined the collection, and expressed his satisfaction by observing that, considering the number of pieces, he had never seen a finer, he cast his eye by chance over the door of the bed-chamber, where hung a portrait of the owner. The Venetian looked upon it, and then upon him. ' This picture was drawn for you ? ' said he to Signor Gualdi, to which the other made no answer but by a low bow. ' You have the appearance,' continued the Venetian, ' of a man of fifty ; and yet I know this picture to be the work of Titian, who has been dead one hundred and thirty years. How is this possible ? ' ' It is not easy,' said Signor Gualdi gravely, ' to know all things that are possible ; but there is no crime in my being like a picture by Titian.' The Venetian easily perceived, by his manner of speaking, that he had given the stranger offence, and therefore took his leave.

" He could not forbear speaking of this in the evening to some of his friends, who resolved to satisfy themselves by looking at the picture carefully the next day. In order to have an opportunity of doing so, they went to the coffee-house about the time that Gualdi was wont to frequent it, and not meeting him there, one of them best known to him went to his lodgings to inquire after him, when he heard that he had set out an hour before for Dresden. This affair made considerable noise at Venice at the time."

This story, even if authentic, admits of explanation. It is probable that this Signor Gualdi was the agent of some imperial or electoral picture fancier, and that he had, by clandestine means, become the possessor of a valuable picture belonging to the state. If that were the case, the inference would be that, when the transaction became known to the police, he would receive orders to quit Venice within four-and-twenty hours.

It is well known that the Philosopher's Stone (the art of transmuting the baser metals into gold), and the *Elizir Vitæ* (which was to restore youth, and make him that possessed it immortal), formed a principal object of the studies of the curious for centuries. Many stories, besides this of Signor Gualdi, have been told of persons who were supposed to be in possession of those marvellous secrets, in the search of which hundreds of unfortunate adventurers wasted their fortunes and their lives.

PAGE 14.

*"What sight so precious to the eye
As beauty in distress —
What music half so sweet as sigh
Of sorrowing loveliness !"*

This amiable sentiment occurs in a French novel by a well-known author, published about twenty years ago.

PAGE 179.

*"And the charcoal-burner's son became
High Lord of Zähringen !"*

The Margraves of Baden belonged to the Zähringen family, the founder of which was Berchtold, Landgrave of Breisgau, who flourished about the middle of the eleventh century. Berchtold's third son, Hermann, acquired Baden by marriage, and his grandson, Hermann the Second, fixed his residence at Baden, and assumed the title of Margrave. The reigning house of Baden descends from Berchtold, the charcoal-burner, who married the daughter of the Landgrave of Breisgau. This Berchtold had probably discovered a silver mine in the Black Forest, which he worked secretly and successfully, until, having accumulated vast wealth, he was enabled to restore the conquered Landgrave to his throne ; when he was rewarded by the hand of the prince's daughter, and the title of Count of Zähringen, together with a grant of the territory, extending from the mountain range, called the Kaisersthul, to the Rhine. On the death of Berchtold the Fifth, last Duke of Zähringen in the direct line, his territories became the inheritance of the younger branch, descended from Hermann the Second, Margrave of Baden.

PAGE 187.

*“ Summoned next morn, from Königstein
The Prince of Nassau rode—”*

The Principality of Nassau was erected into a Dukedom in the year 1806. For several centuries before, the Sovereigns of that country were Princes of the Empire, with the title of *Durchlaucht* (Serene Highness).

PAGE 247.

*“ The other, hung up by the ear,
Fills the wide hall with outcries drear—”*

Frequent mention is made by the early historians of France of the atrocities perpetrated by the robber-nobles of the eleventh and twelfth centuries for the purpose of extorting large sums of money from the travellers and traders who had fallen into their hands. The most usual instrument of torture was named *catasta*. It consisted in placing the prisoner in a cage, or chaining him down upon a bed of iron, and in this situation exposing him to a large fire. But it was reserved for Thomas de Maine, a Baron of Picardy, to exhibit in its perfection the true sublime of villainy.

“ This Seigneur,” says the Abbot of Nogent, quoted by M. de Sismondi, “ had from his earliest youth continually augmented his riches by the pillage of travellers and pilgrims, and extended his domains by incestuous marriages with wealthy heiresses, his relations. His cruelty was so unheard-of, that even butchers, who nevertheless pass for unfeeling, are more sparing of the sufferings of the cattle which they are slaying, than he was of the sufferings of men; for he was not contented with punishing them by the sword for determinate faults, as people are accustomed to do: he racked them by the most horrible tortures. When he wished to extort a ransom from his captives, he hung them up by some delicate part of the body, or laid them upon the ground, and, covering them with stones, walked over them, beating them at the same time, until they promised all that he required, or perished under the operation.” *

* Histoire des Français. Vol. 5, p. 94.

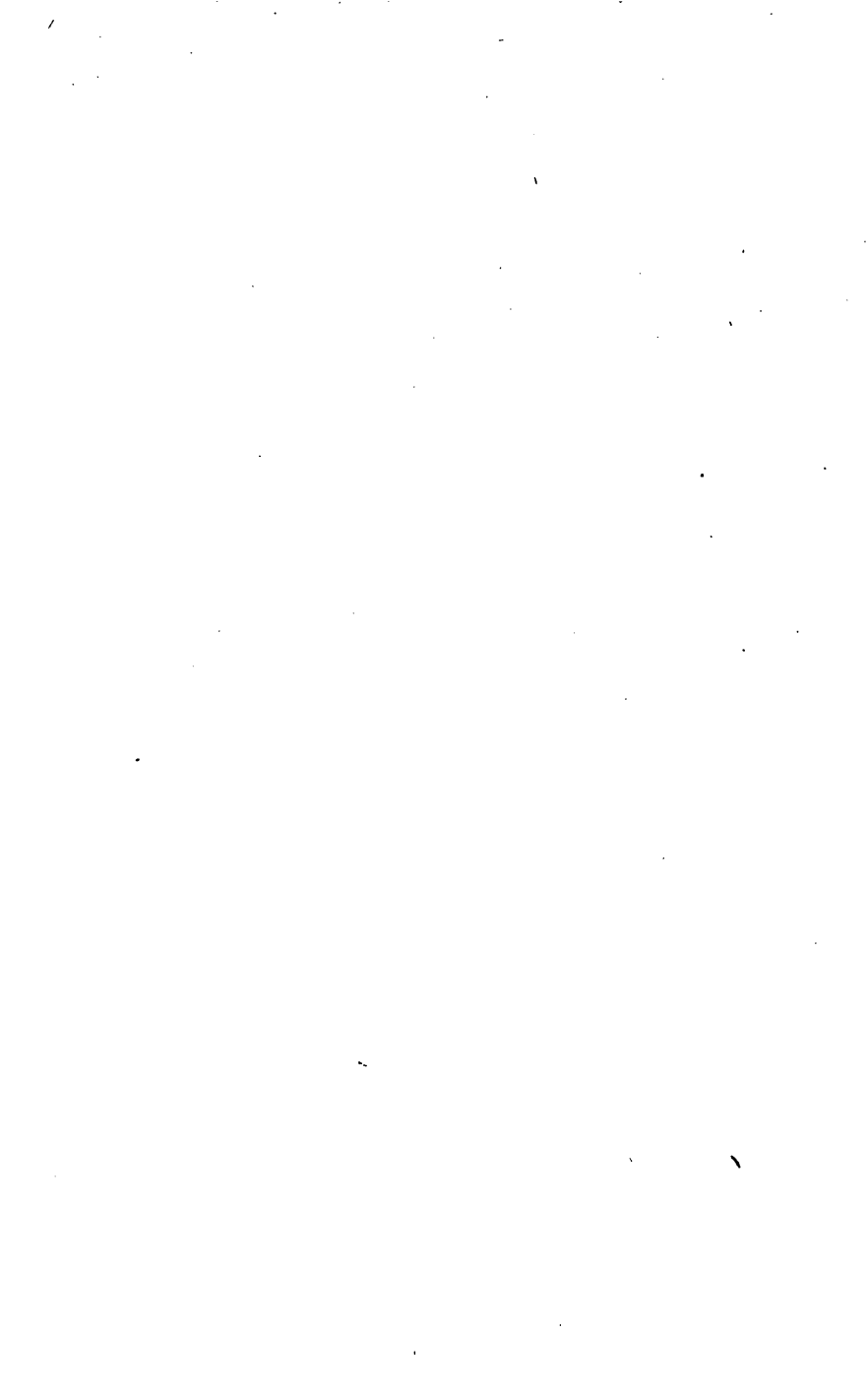
Louis the Fat could not, until the twenty-second year of his reign, subjugate this fiend in human shape. He had continued his execrable mode of life for nearly eighteen years. Being besieged in his castle of Coucy, he was mortally wounded, and taken prisoner in a *sortie*. "The King," says M. de Sismondi, "tried to induce him, in his last moments, to release the traders whom he had kidnapped on the highway, whom he kept in prison to extort a ransom, or tortured for his amusement; but even in the agonies of death, Coucy refused all mercy, and seemed to regret the loss of dominion over his prisoners much more than the termination of life." Thus perished this illustrious ruffian. But his eldest son, Ingelram de Coucy, reigned in his stead. After being vainly attacked by the whole power of the King, he was received into favour, and obtained in marriage a princess of the blood royal. One of his daughters married Alexander II. of Scotland. He affected a more than royal pomp. The following was his *cri de guerre* :—

Je ne suis roy, ni prince aussi :
Je suis le Seigneur de Coucij.

THE END.













YC158253

